

A New Wave for Women's Music

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GayCommunity News

THE WEEKLY FOR LESBIANS AND GAY MALES

BIPAD: 65498

Boston Community Organizes to Defend Gay Foster Parents

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF SOCIAL SERVICES

PARENTING APPLICATION

Date of application _____

Foster ☐ (check one but
Adoptive ☐ not both.)

I hereby apply to be a foster/adoptive parent. In so doing I agree to participate in a homestudy evaluation to determine my qualifications, to release any information necessary for this study, and to allow an inspection of my home. I understand that the Homestudy includes the obtaining of references, an inquiry regarding any criminal record, and verifications of marriage and divorce. I understand that as a foster parent I am a mandated reporter of child abuse and neglect.

Signed: (1) _____

(2) _____

(First)

(Middle)

(Maiden)

(First)

(Town)

(State)

(Zip Code)

(1)

NAME:

(Man's Name)

NAME:

(Woman's Name)

ADDRESS:

(Home)

TELEPHONE:

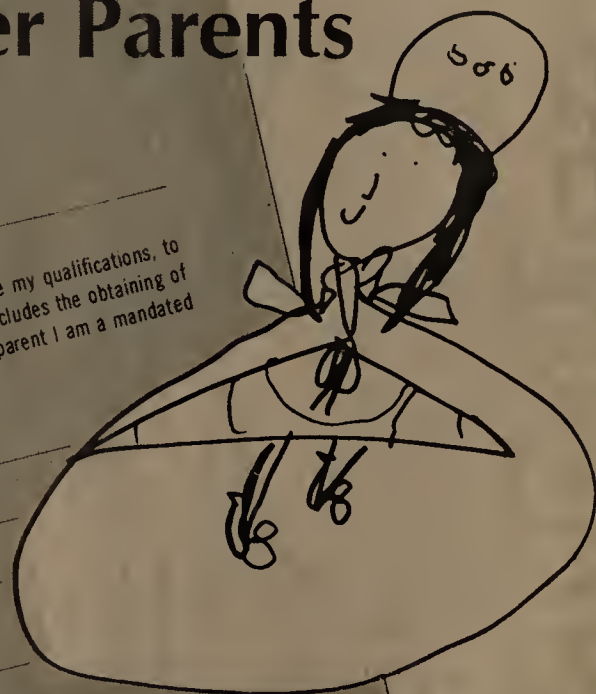
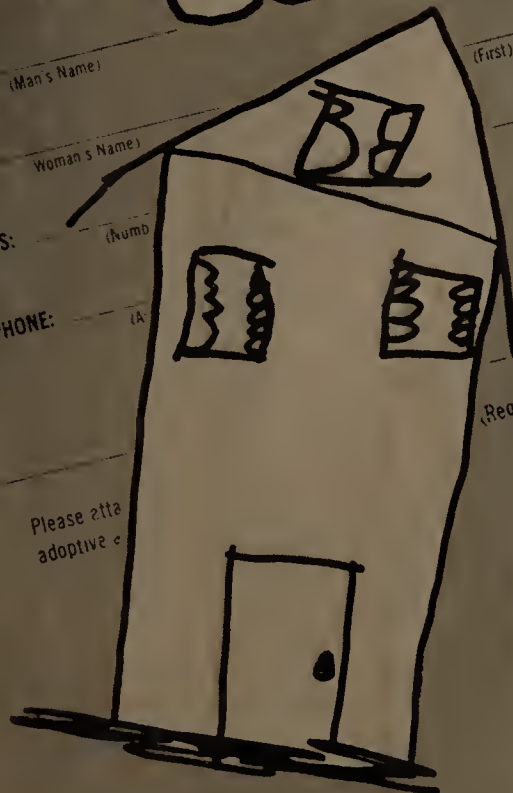
(A)

Please attach
adoptive c

(Required for

ations for placement

(Area Code & Man's Work) (Area Code & Woman's Work) Yes
At a future time would you be interested in foster care? adoption? Y



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May 25, 1985

State DSS policy on foster placement in gay/lesbian homes to be drafted

Community Rallies behind Gay Foster Parents

By Christine Guilfooy

BOSTON — Although the media attention is dying down, the gay and lesbian community has begun to gear up around the case of two gay men, Don Babets and David Jean, whose two foster children were removed from their home by the state's Department of Social Services (DSS). Removal of the two boys, aged two and three and a half years, followed less than twenty-four hours after the story was broken by the *Boston Globe* and despite an initial assurance by DSS that the children would remain in the home.

Publicity surrounding the case has resulted in the review of policy of foster placement in gay homes. Secretary of Human Services Philip Johnston was ordered to conduct the review by governor Michael Dukakis.

At a press conference, DSS commissioner Marie Matava said she had been unaware of the assignment of the children to a gay home, but Babets said he and his lover had applied as an openly gay couple. The department investigation took a year to complete while the usual investigation takes four to six months. The approval of the Babets/Jean application was made by the DSS central office and was communicated to the men by assistant commissioner Joseph Collins. The men point to the length of the investigation and to the level at which it was made as evidence that the department had made a reasoned decision knowing all the facts.

Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD), which is handling the case, called a press conference on May 10 at which executive director Kevin Cathcart read a statement on behalf of the two men, announcing they would appeal the decision to remove the children. The statement said in

part, "After lengthy consultation with our attorneys, we have decided this morning that the children's best interests will be most protected if we seek redress by means of the confidential administrative procedures available within the Department of Social Services. Specifically, we have today filed both a grievance and an appeal in accordance with Department regulations; and our attorneys are seeking a meeting with the Department at the beginning of next week to discuss these matters."

Cathcart told the audience that GLAD has requested that the department "deal with [the appeal] in as timely a fashion as possible." Nancy Coleman, a clinical psychologist and GLAD attorney, is handling the case along with attorney Sandy Smales. Coleman told *GCN* that the department did not follow its own guidelines in the removal of the children from the home.

The administrative hearing has been set for Monday, May 20. The case will be heard by area director Jerry Robinson. However, given the participation of the commissioner in the earlier decision, it is unclear who will make the determination of the appeal for the DSS.

In a May 9 press conference, following removal of the children from the home, Secretary of Human Services Philip Johnston announced that DSS policy in regard to gay foster parents was being reviewed. Currently DSS approval of foster homes is based on the ability to provide a "safe, nurturing and stable family environment." Margaret Cruise, a spokesperson for DSS, told *GCN* that current policy is that sexual orientation is not a bar to becoming a foster parent. The purpose of the current review is to set a policy



GLAD director Kevin Cathcart (l.) and GLAD attorney and psychologist Nancy Coleman at press conference on May 10.

which would specifically address the issue of gay persons acting as foster parents.

In a meeting with DHS secretary Johnston on May 24, gay and lesbian community representatives were told the policy review would be completed within a few weeks. Mary Breslauer, a spokesperson for DHS and an attendee at the meeting, told *GCN* the policy review will be conducted jointly between DSS and Human Services. She said Johnston's review is taking two avenues. The first, she said, involves calling every state in the union to determine what policy, if any, each has regarding the placement of foster children in gay homes. Secondly, said Breslauer, Johnston is consulting with professional child welfare groups to determine their clinical

judgment of the issue.

Richard Burns, a GLAD attorney and one of the attendees at the Johnston meeting, said he and fellow GLAD attorney Cindy Rizzo are compiling information on the legal and clinical information available on the placement of

children in gay homes. Burns said his initial research indicated that New York City and the state of New Jersey have adopted policies, as has Minneapolis. However, the New York and New Jersey policies relate specifically to placing gay

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Chicago to divert funds for alternative sites

HHS Rejects Proposed Ban on HTLV-III Test

By Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves

WASHINGTON, DC — The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has decided to go ahead with plans to help establish alternative sites for the HTLV-III antibody test, despite opposition from the health departments of Philadelphia and Chicago. However, the Illinois Department of Public Health has refused to use federal funds to establish alternative test sites.

In separate letters in March, the Commissioners of Health of Philadelphia and Chicago urged HHS Secretary Margaret Heckler to reconsider the establishment of alternative test sites across the U.S., arguing that high-risk donors would choose the relative anonymity of blood donor centers over the visibility of alternative test sites, and thus infect the blood supply. The Commissioners also asked Heckler to forbid blood banks from revealing test results to donors, and to restrict the distribution of the test kits to research and blood screening (see *GCN*, Vol. 12, No. 40). These

steps were also proposed in order to discourage high-risk individuals from donating blood.

On April 23, James O. Mason, Acting Assistant Secretary of Health, responded to these proposals in a letter to the health commissioners of Philadelphia and Chicago: "After considering all sides of the question we did decide that provisions for alternative test locations should be made, in order to protect blood collection agencies from being used by high-risk individuals seeking to learn if they carry antibodies to the virus." The letter went on to say that regulations neither require nor prevent blood banks from reporting test results. It also stated that the availability of the test need not be restricted since "the package inserts clearly state that the primary use of the test is to screen blood and plasma."

Despite the intentions of HHS, the Illinois Department of Public Health has decided to block the establishment of alternative test

sites within the state and to develop its own guidelines for blood screening. In an April 1 memorandum, former Illinois Director of Public Health Thomas Kirkpatrick wrote, "The Illinois Department of Public Health has devised a...course of action to protect the blood supply from contamination with the AIDS virus. Under this plan, blood banks would not report the... HTLV-III test results to any donor. This action is based on sound public health and medical practice... and is supported by the existing blood banking and clinical laboratory licensing laws in Illinois."

Kirkpatrick went on to write that the relevant statutes require the results of medical tests be given to the physician who requested the test, and not to "the person from whom the specimen was taken." Further, he interprets "the existing statutes to prohibit blood banks from reporting HTLV-III antibody test results."

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Activist refuses to testify

Grand Jury Calls Gay Man

By Larry Goldsmith

NEW YORK — A Washington, D.C. federal grand jury investigating the 1983 bombings of the U.S. Capitol and other government buildings has subpoenaed two more activists, including a New York City gay man.

Bob Lederer, media coordinator of the New York-based New Movement in Solidarity with Puerto Rican Independence and Socialism and a member of Men of All Colors Together (formerly Black and White Men Together), was

fuse to testify.

After obtaining a series of postponements, Lederer and Bisson appeared in court on May 14 where Federal Judge Aubrey Robinson heard legal motions to quash the subpoenas. Reversing himself, Robinson agreed to open the hearing to the public and press. He also asked the attorneys to submit a legal brief in support of their contention that the subpoenas violated the activists' First Amendment rights because the grand jury did not show the men are connected to the bombing in any way. Lederer and Bisson also argued that their position of non-collaboration is protected by international law under the Nuremberg Principles which establish the right to disobey a government's law when that law violates international law. The hearing before Judge Robinson will resume on June 4.

"As lesbians and gay men we are well aware that the right wing has targeted us," Lederer told *GCN*. "And this government is certainly no friend of lesbians and gays. The grand jury is certainly one form of repression that if unchallenged will affect broader and broader movements, and, I think, the lesbian and gay movement."

The grand jury, a secret panel of jurors ostensibly em-

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Bob Lederer

served with the summons on March 27 by four men who came to the office where he works as a legal secretary. The New York activist has announced that he will refuse to testify, even if such a refusal means going to jail. The other activist subpoenaed, Terry Bisson, has also pledged to re-

News Notes

quote of the week

“The main reason this case [Kathy Webb recanting her charge of rape against Gary Dotson] took off like it did was plain old misogyny. Preferring to believe that women lie about rape, it is very easy to rally around the Dotson flag. While the F.B.I. says that only two percent of reported rapes are false reports (reports, not convictions) and 98 percent are true accounts, many people secretly want to believe that it is the 98 percent that are false. The Dotson case affords them the opportunity to keep a good hold on such beliefs.... Guilt and fear of being disbelieved are already two of the biggest reason that only one in 20 women [who are raped] report rape.”

— Deborah Wiatt, from her article, “Remember when Dotson was only a car?” in Post-Amerikan (Bloomington, Ill.), May 1985

‘popie jopie’

UTRECHT, The Netherlands — About 10,000 Dutch feminists, lesbians, gay men and other leftists marched on May 12 in protest of Pope John Paul’s visit to the Netherlands, according to the Boston *Globe*. Several thousand others also demonstrated, frequently clashing with police, in protests centering on the Pope’s conservative views on unmarried couples living together, divorce, lesbians and gay men, married priests, the ordination of women, and contraception. Among the more creative messages to the Pope was the widespread broadcasting of the song “Popie Jopie” — a hit parade piece mocking the Pontiff.

The Dutch church has a strong liberal wing which does not accept many papal dictums. As Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers put it, “To be quite frank, simply the word Rome makes some people uneasy if not downright suspicious.”

Polls showed that one in four Dutch Catholics was “hostile” to the Pope’s visit. In preparation for the expected outcry, police mounted their largest peacetime security operation ever.

Catholics in the Netherlands, who make up 40 percent of the population, were also contesting the ultra-conservative Catholic hierarchy which has been imposed by the Vatican in an attempt to curb progressive tendencies.

manuscripts on black women’s health

The editors of *SAGE: A Scholarly Journal on Black Women* are soliciting manuscripts for the fall 1985 issue on Black women’s health.

The editors encourage articles on the status of Black women’s health — mental and physical, on the impact of new health technologies on Black women’s health, on Black women as health care providers, on Black women and alternative healing systems; analyses on Black women’s experiences with health care delivery systems; personal analyses of Black women’s experiences with illness; and interviews with Black women health activists.

The submission deadline is August 15. For more information, write *SAGE*, P.O. Box 42741, Atlanta, GA 30311-9741.

tenth annual michigan womyn’s music festival

HART, MI — Over 80 musicians will perform this year for the Tenth Anniversary of the Michigan Womyn’s Music Festival. Performers include Toshi Reagon, Diane Lindsay and Sue Fink, Sista Boom, Musica Femina, Debbie Fier, Holly Near, Ferron, Theresa Trull and Barbara Higbie, Linda Tillery, Ronnie Gilbert, Casselberry and Dupree, Mary Watkins, Hunter Davis, Nancy Vogl, Sun Woman Ensemble, Rhiannon and Althea Waites, Make It Mime, Lucie Blue Tremblay, Chevere and more.

The festival also includes dancing, workshops, campfire sing-a-longs, new games, women’s crafts, movies under the stars and “lots of other womyn.”

Dates for this year are August 8, 9, 10, and 11. Advance prices are: four days: \$90-\$110, three days: \$75-\$95 (Fri., Sat., Sun. only), two days: \$60-\$70 (Sat. and Sun. only), one day: \$30-\$35 (Sun. only). For tickets and information, send S.A.S.E. to W.W.T.M.C., 1501 Lyons St., Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858.

breast cancer

ATLANTA — Women whose mothers and sisters had breast cancer are more than twice as likely to develop breast cancer as women with no such family history, according to a major study by the federal Centers for Disease Control as reported in *Womanews*. The study, which involved over 9,000 women in eight areas of the U.S., also showed that women with both a mother and a sister who had the cancer are 14 times as likely to get it as those with no family history.

Approximately one woman in 11 gets breast cancer. More than 38,000 women in the U.S. will die of breast cancer in 1985.

attack on abortion funds in north carolina

RALEIGH, NC — Republican Governor Jim Martin of North Carolina has made the restriction of state-funded abortions for poor women one of the priorities of his administration this year. If Martin gets his way, only women who are victims of incest, rape or whose lives are endangered by pregnancy will be eligible for state-funded abortions. North Carolina is one of the few states in the country that pays for elective abortions for poor women.

As part of his effort, Governor Martin has appointed C. Barry McCarty, a professor at Roanoke Bible College, as the new chairman of the state Social Services Commission. The commission lays down state rules for social service programs. It also manages state programs such as the abortion fund and federal assistance programs such as Aid to Families with Dependent Children and food stamps — programs that McCarty claims “subsidize people for not working.”

Presently, the advantage seems to be with those who would keep the abortion fund intact. Because the money is included in the budget submitted by former Governor Jim Hunt, Governor Martin would have to offer an amendment to remove it, a more difficult proposition than the submission of an original proposal. In addition, Governor Martin has recently suffered several bruising setbacks at the hands of the Democrat-controlled General Assembly, and it is unlikely that he can muster the leverage needed to push through such a controversial proposal at this time.

— filed from Winston-Salem by Marie Godwin

boom-boom to tie nuptial knot

SAN FRANCISCO — Jack Fertig of Sister Boom Boom fame plans to marry a woman, according to the *Bay Area Reporter*. His fiancée, Misty, described as a “professional dominatrix” and known as Sister Mysteria to some, is the first woman to enter the order of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.

When questioned about his decision, Boom Boom responded, “God created a beautiful garden for all of us to enjoy. When we marry, we’ll qualify for domestic partnership benefits.”

Although Jack and Misty say they like each other’s boyfriends and only have sex with each other mentally and spiritually, Jack pointed out that “Just because I’m a man and she’s a woman doesn’t mean we can’t love each other.”

Jack also insists the marriage will not affect the fate of Sister Boom Boom. In fact, he says, “Sister Boom Boom will never die.”



Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence performing “exorcism” rite at San Francisco’s Union Square

wisconsin lesbian to sue police in rape case

RACINE, WI — A lesbian activist is preparing to file suit against Racine police for homophobic conduct in response to her report that she had been raped at knifepoint in September, 1983, according to *OUT!* Cindi Lampman, a member of the Governor’s Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues, reported she was raped in the basement of a Racine church where she worked, by a man who called her “the governor’s dyke.”

Lampman, who will probably file suit against the city in addition to the police department, charged that Detective Paul Preuss, who was initially assigned to the case, made homophobic and unprofessional remarks to her. An internal police investigation cleared Preuss, who is also to be named in the suit.

Lampman hopes a result of the case will be changes in police procedure, policies, and training. There are as yet no suspects in the rape.

gay bar association

BOSTON — The first Annual Meeting of the newly formed *Massachusetts Lesbian & Gay Bar Association* (MLGBA) will take place on Tuesday, May 21 at 5:30 p.m. MLGBA members will elect the Board of Directors and Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) attorney Gary Buseck will make a presentation entitled “Recent Developments in the Law as it Affects Gay Men & Lesbians.” The meeting will take place at the Cabot Auditorium of the Appalachian Mountain Club, 3 Joy Street, Beacon Hill, and is open to lawyers and law students. For more information, contact Richard Burns at 482-6029 or Sandra Smales at 492-5110.

party to our health

BOSTON — A benefit dance for the Fenway Community Health Center will be held on June 14 at the International Institute of Boston, 287 Commonwealth Ave., from 8 p.m. to midnight. Tickets for this pre-Pride fundraiser are available in advance for \$5 from New Words and Glad Day Bookstores, and at the door for \$6. Call 267-7573 for more information.

police killing of bumpurs dismissed

NEW YORK — A state judge has dismissed the second-degree manslaughter indictment against Stephen Sullivan, the police officer who shot and killed Eleanor Bumpurs while attempting to evict her from city-owned housing, according to *Womanews*. A Black woman, 66 years of age, with serious medical problems, Bumpurs had fallen behind on her rent payments.

Citing “legally insufficient evidence,” State Supreme Court Justice Vincent Vitale said Sullivan followed existing police guidelines when he fired two rounds from a pump-action 12-gauge shotgun at Bumpurs.

Bronx District Attorney Mario Merola says he will appeal the ruling. The prosecutor asserts that Justice Vitale looked only at the police account of the killing, ignoring key medical testimony which disproved police claims, including the police assertion that Bumpurs had been holding a knife in her hand when Sullivan shot her a second time.

here we go again

CHICAGO — Two lesbian/gay rights bills were defeated by 4-1 margins on May 7 in the Illinois House, according to Chicago’s *GayLife*. Both House Bills #8 and #9, which would have added the phrase “sexual orientation” to the state’s Human Rights Act and Ethnic Intimidation Act, tallied 79 “no” votes, 19 “yes” votes, and 13 “present” votes.

Bill’s sponsor Rep. Woods Bowman (D-4 Chicago) said, “This is about the same as the vote four years ago in terms of percentages.” Bowman noted, however, that unlike four years ago, “the rhetoric has toned down [which] may mean the mood is changing.... This vote means we have a long ways to go, clearly, but I’m encouraged by the large number of ‘present’ votes.”

Less encouraged was Tim Drake, chairperson of the state’s Gay and Lesbian Task Force State Bills Committee. “I am enraged that these bills received only 19 votes,” said Drake.

SACRAMENTO — A state bill ensuring equal job rights for lesbians and gay men has been pronounced dead for this year, according to the *Bay Area Reporter*. Assemblymember Art Agnos (D-San Francisco) withdrew AB-1 from the Labor Committee when it became clear the measure was one vote short of the seven votes necessary to send it to the Ways and Means Committee.

AB-1 nearly became law last year when it passed the California Legislature on a close vote. Governor Deukmejian vetoed the bill, claiming there wasn’t enough evidence of job discrimination against lesbians and gay men.

Agnos said, “We’ll just continue to push on this thing until we have convinced the ‘no’ votes that they should vote yes.”

reports of child sexual abuse rise by 35%

CHICAGO — The Chicago-based National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse announced in a study that reports of child sexual abuse rose by about 35 percent in 1984, according to the Philadelphia *Gay News*. Roughly this means there were an additional 123,000 reports in that year.

Linden Wheeler, president of the Committee, said, “The findings reflect the unprecedented public exposure through the media to the problem of sexual abuse in 1984 and, in response, the public’s willingness to finally do something about the problem.”

Gay Foster Fathers

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Donald Babets

children in gay homes.

In addition to the gay community, Johnston has also met with the Massachusetts Psychiatric Society, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and caseworkers from DSS, the Department of Youth Services, and the Office for Children, Breslauer said. She noted one concern Johnston heard in some of

[so-called 'normal'] placements." (Statistics now indicate that foster homes are often single-parent or one where both parents work.)

Colantuono also said that those at the meeting held that the primary factor in providing good foster care is a loving and supportive environment for the children. Should DHS decide to bar or limit

liberation from a civil rights focus to the next level. "It is the next battle [and] it is an issue of getting our families respected."

Expressing some concerns about the meeting with Johnston, Scondras commented, "The meeting is not necessarily bad; it raises issues that need to be raised. [But] politicians understand two things, votes and money. All other arguments are irrelevant.... The issue the administration has is concern not for the kids but the concern that sticking up for the [gay] couple will cost votes."

Colantuono said that gay people should hinge future support for governor Dukakis around his

who shepherded the ordinance through the council, said, "[The ordinance] wasn't designed with [this case] in mind. It's unclear to me what section it would come under."

A meeting was called by GLAD on May 15 for members of the lesbian and gay community to discuss actions the community should take. Out of the meeting, attended by 50 people, came calls for letter-writing campaigns, lobbying support from the Democratic Party, and organizing meetings with representatives of the Boston *Globe*, which broke the story, and the Boston *Herald*.

Several members of the lesbian

home setting and place him [sic] in as normal a home setting as possible. For foster children, the most normal home setting — even if it is no longer statistically the most prevalent — is clearly that of a married man and woman with two or three children of their own. If the foster children are below school age, the setting will be most normal if the woman stays home as a full-time caretaker." Colantuono said the local chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW) is planning a response.

In addition, a May 12 article in the *Globe* quoted Francis G. Poitras, the administrative justice of the Massachusetts Juvenile

“For foster children the most normal home setting — even if no longer statistically the most prevalent — is clearly that of a married man and woman with two or three children of their own.”

stance on this issue.

Noting the widespread attention given to the issue locally, many activists have wondered what the long-term effects and implications might be. When asked whether the case would have an effect on the gay rights bill currently pending in the state legislature, BLGPA's Colantuono replied, "The gay rights bill is in great shape. Those who are upset were not with us anyway." And Scondras commented, "The objective is not to get a piece of paper. It is the act of coming out which is effective. [We] won't change society without rocking the boat. Progress [will] be made because we stood up for our self-respect." Scondras told *GCN* that lesbians and gay men must organize into a structure with political power which in turn will make demands on the system.

and gay community have expressed dissatisfaction with the *Globe*, in particular. While the original *Globe* article implied neighbors were upset over the placement of the children in the gay couple's home, others dispute this, saying one individual, Ben Haith, was upset and that he contacted the media. Haith told *GCN* in an earlier interview that the *Globe* reporter contacted him. Haith is well known to members of the gay community who live in the Highland Park (Fort Hill) section of Roxbury.

However, Graylan Ellis-Hagler, a minister of a local church, told *GCN*, "The *Globe* started the upset. Nobody really knew [about the placement]. It's [*Globe* writer] Ken Cooper that created the controversy."

Haith has maintained publicly that the couple should have consulted him before taking in the children and that the neighbors object to the situation. However, 36 of the Babets/Jean neighbors attended a meeting of support just after the children were removed.

Gay activists Eric Rofes and Ann Maguire have organized a meeting with the editors of the *Globe* for Monday, May 20, both to discuss the specific case and to review wider editorial policy.

The *Globe* also published an editorial on May 13, saying in part, "The goal of foster care is to remove a child from an abnormal

Courts, as saying that he resists placing foster children with gay men because of the risk of sexual abuse. As *GCN* goes to press, a press conference has been organized by area lesbian and gay groups to denounce the remarks and to announce the filing of a formal complaint with the Commission on Judicial Conduct which will "seek a formal reprimand of the judge."

GLAD's attorney and psychologist Coleman, who appeared on a local television program with the judge, said that the majority of abuse cases involve a male perpetrator and a female child. She said statistics indicate that about seven percent of abuse could be classified as homosexual.

Letter-writing campaigns have also been organized. Babets and GLAD ask that letters of support for Babets and Jean be sent to: Marie Matava, Dept. of Social Services, 150 Causeway St., Boston, MA 02114 and to: Hon. Michael Dukakis, Governor, State House, Boston, MA 02133.

Removal of the two boys followed less than twenty-four hours after the story broke in the Boston Globe.

these meetings is that foster children, who often are being removed from stressful homes, will be subjected to new pressures as part of a potentially stigmatized home. Responding to that notion was Michael Colantuono, the vice chairperson of the Boston Lesbian and Gay Political Alliance (BLGPA), who told *GCN*, "I could accept that argument if you had a limitless supply of the

gay men and lesbians from foster parenthood, such a decision "would fly in the face of what every professional recommends," said Colantuono. "I'm not saying you shouldn't ever take sexual orientation into account. But," he added, "it should not be a determining characteristic."

Openly gay Boston City Councilor David Scondras said the Babets/Jean case moves gay

However, at least one attorney worried that an adverse DSS ruling could adversely impact gay discrimination cases before the courts.

Fred Mandel, the executive director of the newly formed Boston Human Rights Commission, said they were meeting to attempt to determine if the Human Rights Ordinance would have jurisdiction. However, Scondras,

HHS Response

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This effectively prohibits alternative test sites as well, since they would be established to inform people of their test results.

The Illinois Department of Public Health has received almost \$900,000 in a 90-day grant from HHS to set up alternative test sites. According to a spokesperson for the Department, Chet June, the Medical Determinations Board has not decided how this money should be used now that sites will not be created. The Board will convene meetings in coordination with the Chicago

Area AIDS Task Force next month to consider how the money will be spent. The Board is advisory to current Public Health Director Benjamin J. Turnock.

Ross Havlak of the Department of Sexually Transmitted Diseases of the Centers for Disease Control, which is administering the grant, told *GCN* that the grants for alternative test sites are quite specific, and that any new proposal by the state of Illinois would have to be carefully evaluated. "If the new proposal is consistent with the terms of the grant, we

would consider releasing the funds. If it is not, we would withdraw funds."

According to Robert Sharar, Director of the Division of Disease Control for the Philadelphia Department of Health, at least one alternative test site will be set up with the \$228,000 Philadelphia received. However, Sharar said, "I don't think they [HHS] addressed the issues we raised in our letter. I don't think alternative test sites will protect the blood supply."

— filed from Boston

Grand Jury

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paneled to consider whether preliminary evidence merits a full-fledged trial, has the power to compel testimony from witnesses under threat of imprisonment. Because the proceedings are secret, the witness may not have an attorney present during questioning. Particularly during the 1970s, grand juries were used as "fishing expeditions" to provide prosecutors and the F.B.I. with information about radical and feminist movements.

The grand jury in Washington, D.C., is reportedly investigating

the bombing of the U.S. Capitol, a military officers' club, and a military computer center that took place in 1983. Four people are currently in prison for refusing to testify to that grand jury.

A grand jury in Brooklyn, N.Y. reportedly investigating the Puerto Rican independence movement has also subpoenaed several activists, some of whom have been imprisoned for refusing to testify. Pamela Fadern, a lesbian activist and grand jury resister whose story was reported in *GCN* in October, 1984 (see *GCN*, Vol. 12,

No. 15) was recently allowed to remain free despite a contempt conviction. Testimony of a physician had asserted that incarceration would pose a grave threat to Fadern, who has a chronic medical condition.

For more information, or to attend the hearing on June 4 in Washington, D.C., or to donate to the legal defense fund, write to Stop the Witchhunts!, P.O. Box 406, Stuyvesant Station, New York, New York 10009 or call (212) 244-4270.

— filed from Boston

Still no recognition for lesbian/gay groups at Georgetown D.C. Ties Funds to Rights Act

By Jim Ryan

WASHINGTON, DC — On Tuesday, May 14, the District of Columbia City Council approved unanimously by voice vote the application of Georgetown University to receive some \$72 million in revenue bonds. Attached to the application was an agreement, long sought by leaders of the gay and lesbian community, that the university would abide by all provisions of the District's Human Rights Ordinance.

As with all legislation passed by the city council under Washington's limited powers of home rule, the bill must sit before Congress for consideration for 60 legislative days. During that time, either house of Congress can initiate action to overturn the legislation. The Memorial Day and August recesses place the end of this period in late September, so Georgetown could not expect to receive the money until October 1985 at the earliest.

The university continues to

refuse to recognize the gay and lesbian students' group at its law school and main campus. If the situation does not change by the time the legislation takes effect, the director of the city's Office of Human Rights, Maudine Cooper, will be required to determine whether this violates the compliance agreement. It will be in her power to deny the university the money if a human rights violation is found to exist.

It is expected, however, that a decision by the D.C. Court of Appeals in a case involving the student groups will be issued before then, determining once and for all whether Georgetown's refusal to recognize the groups is a violation of the District's human rights act.

The university is also initiating a request for an additional \$130 million in revenue bonds; the success of this request may hinge on the Court of Appeals' decision.

Correction

A news note of Vol. 12, No. 39, entitled "dc farecard," should read, "only five of the District's cases are Latino" rather than "only five percent of the District's cases are Latino."

Community Voices

how could you do it?

(GCN received a copy of this letter to Barbara Grier, owner of Naiad Press.—Ed.)

Dear Ms. Grier,
As lesbian bibliophiles, we've supported the Naiad Press for years and always wished you the best. In the past year alone, we've purchased *Amateur City*, *The Sophie Horowitz Story*, *Daughters of a Coral Dawn*, *The Price of Salt*, *Curious Wine*, *Mrs. Porter's Letter*, *Faultline*, and *Anna's Country*. In addition to those, we own quite a few other Naiad Press books.
Throughout the years, we've been extremely pleased.

All of which serves to magnify our extreme disappointment with the story of your dealings with *Forum* magazine, which is owned by Penthouse Ltd. (publisher of *Penthouse* magazine).

HOW COULD YOU DO SUCH A THING??
If the front page story in the 4/27/85 (Boston) *Gay Community News* is accurate, you sold serial rights for *Lesbian Nuns: Breaking Silence* to *Forum* without the consent of the book's editors or contributors. How dare you do such a thing?

THOSE WOMEN DEALT WITH YOU IN GOOD FAITH. HOW DARE YOU BETRAY THEM BY EXPLOITING THEIR STORIES FOR A MALE PORNOGRAPHY MAGAZINE???

We are INCENSED! As, we imagine, the book's editors and contributors are. And with good reason. Such a move betrays every shred of decency and every principle of feminism. It is absolutely inexcusable!

And as for your bullshit smokescreen about doing it so you could reach more women — GET SERIOUS! Do you honestly expect anyone to buy that crap? It seems fairly obvious that you did it for one reason — money. Obviously you care more about money than you do about women — bc they your writers, contributors, or readers! If you didn't, you'd realize how much pain your actions can cause — and how much you've violated the trust of every woman who has ever dealt with Naiad Press in *any* capacity.

You just sold out, Ms. Grier. You put love of money ahead of women, and that won't do. There's nothing wrong with making money if it's done with integrity, but you've just chosen to make money at the expense of women's pain. And not just your contributors' pain, either — by collaborating with a male pornography magazine, you've given support to an industry that exploits women of every age, race, and class.

Well that won't do for a "feminist" press, and you can expect to hear a lot of women telling you so!

We were about to purchase a copy of *Lesbian Nuns: Breaking Silence*. It's probably an excellent book, but we'll probably never know for sure. It's unfortunate, but true. Because unless you change your policy — and cancel this *Forum* deal ASAP — you can kiss our business goodbye forever!

Carol D. Mortimer and Judith E. Kottke
Collingswood, NJ

P.S. Copies of this letter will be sent to *The Gay Community News*, Giovanni's Room bookstore in Philadelphia, and other locations. We urge widespread communication of this letter to ask that other feminists who agree with us contact the Naiad Press and boycott their publications in protest of this action.

giving others the idea

Dear GCN,
You should soon be receiving a box of books, if you haven't already, which were collected through our ongoing book drive in Albany, NY. I thought it would be a good idea to publish this letter in Community Voices to give other lesbians and gay men the idea to start similar book drives in their communities. All it means is leaving a few collection boxes around town at gay/lesbian/feminist bookstores or centers or wherever, picking up the books periodically and sending them to GCN. We collected a lot of straight books too, which weren't worth shipping to Boston (because I understand that you already get more of those than you can use) but we sold them to a used bookshop and are enclosing the money to be used for postage to mail the books to the prisoners.
Best,
Rachel Brody
Malden Bridge, NY

GCN welcomes letters to the editor. If possible, they should be TYPED and DOUBLESPPCED, and where possible limited to five typed pages. They should be sent to: Community Voices, GCN, 167 Tremont St. #5, Boston, MA 02111.

where's the money going?

Dear GCN:
In a recent letter to GCN, Marsha Levine suggests that Brian Quinby donate the proceeds of his "Image Conscious Faggot" button to the Gay Pride Committee.
I think a lot of us would feel more comfortable making donations to the Pride Committee if we felt the community were being told the truth about where the money was going.

Sincerely,
French Wall
Boston, MA

dealing with sexual difficulties

Dear GCN:
Thanks to Sarah Pearlman for her letter in last week's GCN Community Voices (Vol. 12, No. 42) describing the substance of the workshop she led on lesbian sexuality at the Women's Studies regional conference. I missed her presentation because I was out of town on the weekend of the conference, and have since heard rumors of controversy which Betsy Duren's GCN article of April 20 did nothing to clarify for me. (Duren provided only a vague description of Pearlman's presentation, while her brief and dismissive mention of audience dissent gave no clue as to the content of the criticisms, boxing them instead into some undefined and insulting category of knee-jerk political correctness.)

While Pearlman's letter does not attempt to discuss opposing points of view, it is helpful to read her coherent synopsis of her own thinking on how to deal with sexual problems in lesbian relationships. It provides a welcome opportunity for dialogue about some important issues and ideas.

I am concerned about some of the suggestions Pearlman makes in her letter, as I understand them. As I read her, she is suggesting that sexual aggressiveness and deliberate promotion of conflict within long-term relationships can make for a better sex life. It may be that her suggestions work some of the time with some women, and my general philosophy would be, "if it works, do it." In that case, however, I would add the proviso that "success" not be measured, as it almost sounds like Pearlman is doing, only according to the *quantity* of sex happening in a relationship. (For example, if sex is plentiful, but can only be achieved if accompanied by intense self-hate or by an addiction to drugs or alcohol, is this an improvement over lack of sex?)

But my concern is that it's not always going to work. I am concerned in particular that for women who have experienced sexual trauma and/or are substance-addicted, this advice may actually be harmful. (Since a huge percentage of the lesbian community falls into one or both of those categories, I think any responsible discussion of lesbian sexual difficulties should at least acknowledge us.)

Pearlman herself states, "particular socializations and often traumatizing experiences" have special impact on the ways women adapt sexually. I don't see how the suggestions she makes about accentuating differences and playing with power are going to get to the root of any but the most surface sexual difficulties, since they seem to call for cosmetic and behavioral changes without addressing more core issues and causes. What these suggestions may do for individual women with more deep-seated problems is open the door to self-blame (feelings of "failure") or trigger the recovery of long-submerged memories and feelings, a process that can be incapacitating without proper support and structure. What they may do for lovers who are not communicating well is blow apart relationships. Yet if Pearlman does provide any kind of long-term support and structure to women she works with directly, she says nothing about this in her letter.

It seems more fruitful and less potentially harmful to suggest (emphatically) that changes in sexual behavior be accompanied by deep emotional work (either through therapy or self-help) to get to the source of a woman's particular experiences of trauma and socialization, promoting communication between lovers about what those experiences mean, and to couple this with major political work to prevent such negative sexual experiences from continuing to "impact" women (Pearlman's choice of verb, not mine).

Such a radical approach takes considerable time and patience and might make it difficult to fend off feelings of hopelessness. It may not win any races based on clocking orgasms-per-minute. And it is not particularly trendy in a movement looking for quick solutions — and looking for a good time after so many years of focusing on fear and danger. But it may be more effective in the long run in promoting the kind of satisfying sexual/emotional relationships among lesbians that I think we all want, and it doesn't fall into the deadly trap of blaming the victim for deep-rooted and misery-inducing problems with sex caused by growing up female in this culture.

Sincerely,
Pam Mitchell
Cambridge, MA

more writers of color

Dear GCN:
I read with "pride and interest" the centerfold lead article by Charles Henry Fuller in Vol. 12, No. 38 — April 1, 1985. It was refreshing to read another of his several articles in the GCN. The perspectives of people of color in this "lifestyle" that's christened gay are so much more critical and challenging. Whereas mainstream is "tolerated" to society's described niches, gays of color dream little but live on many edges of survival. There is little comfort in our grasp.
Hope to hear more from Fuller and other writers of color.

Sincerely,
Howard
Brooklyn, NY

trusting the screws

Dear Mike,
Last October you wrote me a letter concerning "management problems" with gay prisoners; the "total control" that the prison administration has over us, etc. You questioned how I could "trust" this same administration when they encourage the abuse that so many gays suffer, and you suggested that I encourage the gay prisoners here to band together and fight for their rights (which are very few in prison).

When I received your letter it made me extremely angry, because at that time I was trying to "trust" the administration. I was trying to work with them to stop the abuse of gay prisoners and I had put together the "Gay Inmate Network" (G.I.N.).

The population at the facility I was at then averaged 750. Through my efforts I had gotten the job as editor of the prison paper and was elected by the inmate population as chairman of the Inmate Council. A lot of gays thought I was crazy trying to do so much volunteer work, until they realized that I was (apparently) gaining "power" and was able to get many of the gays better jobs and (temporarily) some reduction of the harassment.

Unfortunately, the other staff members who were threatened by their own sexuality and their prejudices against gays began to harass even more strongly. At that point I felt I was in a good position to go to the administration and "know" they would listen to me and help. At first, nothing happened, and then it seemed the whole world collapsed around me. I was physically assaulted by three inmates and nothing was done against them, even though staff were aware of it. I went to the staff and told them I was having problems and I needed help. I was told they would "handle it . . ." I was assaulted again, quite seriously this time, and I asked to be locked up for my protection. Once again, they said they would "handle it" and refused to lock me up. Then after a series of events too complicated to explain here I ended up where I am in a Maximum Security Unit in protective custody. I'm locked in my cell 23 hours a day with one hour out to shower and exercise.

The administration that I had trusted and worked my ass off for has denied any knowledge of my asking for help.

I've been incarcerated for over seven years (I'm due to parole 3/86) but with new charges (classic case of blaming the victim) filed against me, I may be here for much longer.

Violence is a way of life here and if one doesn't participate in it they are labeled weak, crazy or queer. Mostly the latter.

I don't know if I've said what I wanted to but I hope so. I guess it all comes down to one thing. The judicial system and the prison system SUCK! In fact probably more than myself and a thousand gays have done in their lifetime. Excuse the sarcasm but I'm bitter.

I would appreciate two things, if possible. A complimentary sub to GCN and a chance to appear in the "Prisoner Seeking Friends" penpal space, in hopes that I can find some people to write to.

If anyone else in prison ever writes you and tells you how good and trustful the administration are, send them this letter or tell them the contents and make sure they open their eyes. I hope it won't be too late for them as it has been for me. Thanks for listening. I wish I would have listened to you many months ago. Take care and continue the good work you're doing at GCN.

Sincerely,
A. Brent Earls
Box 600 - 44604
Canon City, CO 81212

Don't miss this!
Far out! Fantastic!
Gay/Lesbian Film Festival
Benefit for GCN, June 5, 8 pm
at the Orson Welles when *Drifting*
and *Each Other* make their
Boston debut. Come help your
favorite paper and have a heck
of a good time while you're
at it!



GayCommunityNews

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Cover drawings
by Boston area children

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Speaking Out

Fight for the Rights of Lesbian and Gay Families

By Kevin Cathcart, Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders

Last week the Department of Social Services (DSS) removed two children from the foster home of a gay male couple. Governor Dukakis has ordered the Office of Human Services to formulate a DSS policy regarding foster placements with lesbians and gay men. It is *important* that we lobby the Governor, the Secretary of Human Services, and the Commissioner of DSS, to ensure that this policy protects our rights to be foster parents.

Please write to register your dissatisfaction with the Department's removal of the children from the gay men's home. It would be helpful to state that you support the rights of lesbians and gay men to be foster and adoptive parents, that the Department is in desperate need of quality care for children and that it should not reject a potentially large group of loving and capable parents. Urge the Governor, the Secretary and the Commissioner to take this opportunity to educate themselves about lesbian and gay families and parenting so that they do not respond on the basis of prejudice or misinformation. Also urge the governor to actively support the pending gay rights bill.

Letters should be sent to:

Hon. Michael Dukakis
Governor
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Marie Matava
Commissioner
Department of Social Services
150 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02114

Philip Johnston
Exec. Office of Human Servies
1 Ashburton Place, Room 1109
Boston, MA 02108

It is also important to make phone calls to DSS and the Office of Human Services to express your support for gay and lesbian foster parents. Call DSS at (617) 727-0900 and ask for the commissioner's office; call the Executive Office of Human Services at (617) 727-8065.

While you are writing letters, it is also important to write to the Boston *Globe* and the *Herald* to express your dissatisfaction with their coverage of the story and with their editorials criticizing lesbian and gay foster placements. Write to the editors at:

The Boston Globe
135 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02107

The Boston Herald
One Herald Square
Boston, MA 02106

These letters *are* important. We understand that a decision by the Office of Human Services is imminent. Therefore, it is *critical* that you send out your letters immediately. You can have a major impact — but only if you act right now.

GLAD is the New England-based lesbian and gay legal organization doing litigation and educational work on custody, employment, police harassment/entrapment, and related issues for gay men and lesbians. GLAD attorneys are representing the two gay foster parents.

“Speaking Out” is part of our continuing effort to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings and comments to us and we encourage you to respond to any ideas expressed in this space. Submissions to “Speaking Out” should be TYPED and DOUBLE SPACED, and, if possible, held to under 5 pages in length. The opinions expressed in “Speaking Out” do not necessarily reflect the views of the newspaper, the staff or the advertisers. Write c/o Speaking Out, GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th Fl., Boston, MA 02111.

Community Voices

compassion in the hinterlands

(GCN received a copy of this letter to the editor of the Williamsport Sun-Gazette in Williamsport, Pa.—Ed.)

Dear Mr. Thomas:

The Rev. Joseph C. Simpson's pronouncement (WSG, 4-25-85) that the church lacks compassion and understanding towards homosexuals addressed the seldom acknowledged problem of prejudice that robs people of the rich opportunity to listen openly, to understand, and to know others on the basis of their individual reality rather than their stereotypic labels. Gay men and lesbians are of course not the only societal group to be looked down on (consider Jews, blacks, various ethnic groups, the poor, women) and all are certainly worthy of respect and goodwill.

In a region marked by a conservative consciousness, the Rev. Simpson displayed rare spiritual fortitude when challenging others to examine their religious reflexes, which often serve to isolate people from one another “by doctrine and lack of charity.”

He correctly identified the particular problem of responding to gay men and lesbians as one rooted in homophobia — the irrational fear or hatred of homosexuality. It encompasses both the fear heterosexuals have of any homosexual feelings within themselves and the self-hatred and self-denial of homosexuals who have internalized the pervasive belief that people like themselves are sick, sinful, and criminal.

The Rev. Simpson's call for open-mindedness and examination of moral absolutes has the potential for significantly alleviating the hurtfulness which often goes unrecognized and ultimately harms all of us.

Sincerely,
Judith S. Berman
John D. Stout
Williamsport, PA

against black, feminine types

Dear GCN,

This letter is written in response to an article in GCN describing discrimination at the Chaps bar in Boston. Myself, I have never had any difficulty getting into gay bars in Texas, however I have had experience with my lover of that sort.

It was Friday night and my lover and I were going to dinner and then the disco. My lover's name was Silicia and he was 20 years old at the time and a black “fluff” gay, quite feminine in mannerisms and conduct.

The attendant told me that Silicia would have to present three valid Texas identifications. Silicia presented his only identification, a Texas driver's license, but was refused entrance. We asked to speak to the manager but were told he was “busy” and would be for quite some time.

Silicia tried to play it off, but I could tell he was deeply disturbed but did not want to start any trouble. As we were walking home we bought some wine. Never before had I seen him drink as he did. He asked me to go out and get some more, and as I returned I heard him crying real hard. That was a very painful evening to say the least.

Due to Silicia's young age the effect of this was very deep and I just wanted you people in Boston to know this happens in Dallas and elsewhere too.

Presently, I am at the Walls Unit and considered a ‘dangerous’ political prisoner, because I do so much legal work for myself and others in here. I am housed in a cell with no cell mate; so no companionship or rapping, just studying, writing and sleeping. I shall prevail, however, and not let this overcome my positive state of mind I have worked so hard to maintain as of lately.

Thank you for your attention and support.
Chester Vinton Haas
327322 A
Ellis I
Huntsville, TX 77343

AIDS Resource List

AIDS Action Committee — 16 Haviland Street, Boston, MA 02115, 267-7573

Education and support group for people with AIDS, their families, lovers, friends and health care providers. Provides speakers, conducts forums, rap groups, hospice-trained volunteers, hotline information and referrals. Associated with the Fenway Community Health Center.

AIDS Benefit Review Committee (267-7573) or (725-4849)

Joint subcommittee of Mayor's Committee on AIDS and AIDS Action Committee to coordinate AIDS fundraisers, monitor process and review results. All groups of individuals planning AIDS fundraisers are encouraged to coordinate their efforts with the subcommittee.

Gay and Lesbian Counseling Services 600 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02111 (542-5118)

AIDS Hotline — (424-5916)

The Community Infectious Disease Epidemiology Program of the City of Boston. Staff of public health nurses answer questions about AIDS, make referrals. Collects city-wide data from hospitals on AIDS cases, forwards data to Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, officially determines number of cases probable and under investigation.

Fenway Community Health Center 16 Haviland Street, Boston, MA 02115 (267-7573)

Hotline information, medical work-ups, diagnosis, referrals, counseling. A gay sensitive health care facility. Participates in research efforts.

AIDS Action Line — 536-7733

AIDS Action Committee service, information, referrals and befriending about AIDS. Massachusetts AIDS toll-free hotline: 1-800-235-2331.

Gay and Lesbian Hotline — 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm, M-F (426-9371)

Provides information on AIDS, makes referrals. Associated with Gay and Lesbian Counseling Services.

Haitian Committee on AIDS in Massachusetts — 117 Harvard Street, Dorchester, MA 02124 (436-2808)

Provides information, referrals, support and emergency assistance to Haitians with AIDS and their families.

Mayor's Committee on AIDS — Room 608, Boston City Hall, Boston, MA 02201 (725-4849)

Coordinates efforts of federal, state, and city health agencies, produces educational material, collects data on cases, reviews policy. Umbrella organization. Media outlet. Conducts forums and provides speakers, distributes AIDS brochures, referrals.

National Gay Task Force Hotline (1-800-221-7044)

Toll free national hotline run by NGTF to provide information and referrals.

Springfield Downtown Ministry /Council of Churches — 293 Bridge Street Room 205, Springfield, MA 01103-1402 (737-4125)

Counseling and referrals.

Massachusetts Department of Public Health Maintains a statewide surveillance system on AIDS cases and close contact with the Centers for Disease Control. Does follow-up of diagnosed cases, makes referrals, provides information on AIDS.

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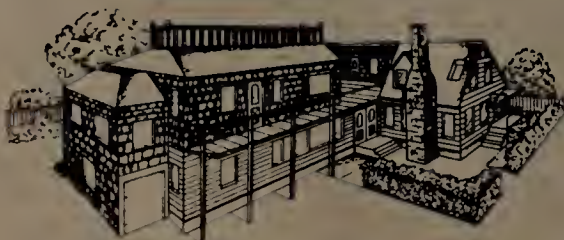


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Porn Debate Continues

Dorchen Leidholdt vs. Civil Liberties Union

By Sean Herlihy

Dorchen Leidholdt, a founding member of Women Against Pornography, and Natasha Lisman, President of the Massachusetts Civil Liberties Union, recently debated at the Boston Public Library on the subject of "Women, Pornography and Censorship." The event, sponsored by the Women's National Book Association, drew some 25 Association members aged approximately between 35 and 60 years old, and a handful of unaffiliated women and men.

Leidholdt's most moving arguments stemmed from her reports of women who had been subjected to sexual coercion and violence in connection with pornography. In one of the most harrowing examples, two elementary school boys killed a younger girl after sexually molesting her. They said they got the idea from pornography magazines belonging to one of the boy's parents.

Leidholdt cited a number of re-

argument against censorship of sexually explicit material with an analogy between organized religion and pornography, noting that religion has good qualities, but has also oppressed women. Speaking of pornography, Lisman

pornography activists to adopt other tactics: "Speech should be fought with speech.... These ordinances are an admission of powerlessness.... We should have power in our ability to meet the pornographer's message with our

Leidholdt charged, "The ACLU values the speech of pornographers [too much] and the cries of their victims not at all."

stated unequivocally, "I agree that the rampant spread of pornography is a symptom of a social pathology." But Lisman went on to question whether censorship is appropriate to stop the damage these two institutions cause: "Do I resort to a remedy like the [Minneapolis] ordinance? The remedy is worse than the disease." In Lisman's assessment, the use of

own."

Leidholdt also spoke about the legislative effort in Minneapolis. She characterized the bill as "not a ban...not censorship" and described the Minneapolis organizing effort as "a neighborhood campaign of poor people." Concluding her prepared statement, Leidholdt charged, "The A.C.L.U. values the speech of pornographers [too much] and the cries of their victims not at all."

Following the presentations, most of the questions from the audience repeated Lisman's concern that anti-pornography legislation might be used to suppress valuable images and words. One woman disagreed with Lisman's comparison of religion to pornography, arguing that pornography, as defined by the bill, had only bad qualities. Lisman responded by speculating that the bill might be used against a book with such recognized literary merit as *Lady Chatterly's Lover*. She added that she did not trust "a judge in the Boston Municipal Court to decide" if that or any other book should be censored.

In another example of what

In Lisman's assessment, the use of legislation by the feminist anti-pornography movement is "Morally impermissible and tactically suicidal."

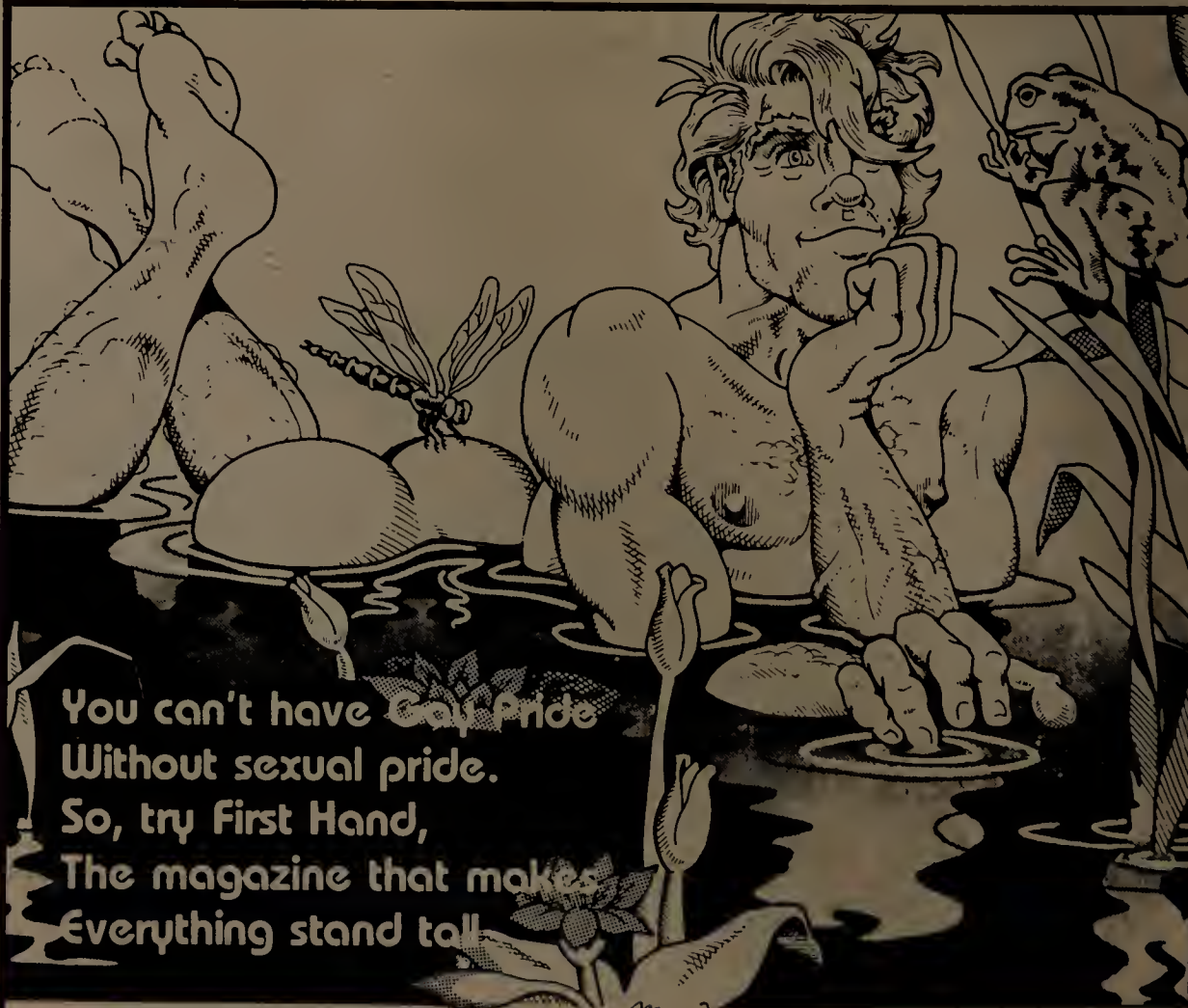
search projects to support her position. In the studies of Drs. Edward Donnerstein and Neil Malamuth, male college students, after viewing pornography, adopted attitudes similar to those of convicted rapists. In laboratory settings these men behaved more aggressively after exposure to pornography. Leidholdt did not identify the types of pornography used in these studies.

Natasha Lisman opened her

legislation by the feminist anti-pornography movement is "morally impermissible and tactically suicidal." As evidence of this, Lisman cited "the unholy alliance" between anti-pornography feminists and "the Moral Majority and the New Right." She stressed that supporters of the bill are "disingenuous...to say this law is not censorship."

Rather than legislative campaigns, Lisman advised anti-

Continued on page 10



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Mike Kuchar © 83

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“Very Queer” Families: Quite the Turmoil

By Janet Lee

Six months ago I awoke in the middle of the night and decided I had to write about my family and some of my experiences coming out. It's taken me this long to sort through my feelings about some recent family events. Finally I'm able to write.

We throw around the words “coming out” a lot, but each of us has our own personal meaning. To me it is a process of balancing my own deepest feelings against realities outside of myself, and coming to some kind of acceptance or identity. The next part is sharing that self with others. As a lesbian, I see coming out as similar to what everyone faces in the choice of how honest to be with themselves and others who are different in any way. Remembering this helps me stay human and not become a lesbian martyr. Self-acceptance is an important step for me, especially since I want to be gutsy and out in the world. I want to contribute my share of risk-taking so that those who follow

will find more acceptance in this hate-filled world. It is in this spirit of being out that I share my story and that of my family. I write under an assumed name to protect the members of my family who aren't ready to share this story.

Just when I thought I was a well-adjusted dyke, letters from my youngest brother, age 18, began

Coming Out

pouring into my home. After years of questioning his sexuality, he'd recently decided that he's probably gay and he needed my support. His youth, his fear of AIDS, and the fact that he's the third male in our family to be involved with men has made this a difficult process for him. It's caused me quite the turmoil as well!

I come from a family that is half queer — that is gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual (we need an inclusive term for a group like us). My parents and two sisters are

straight, and my three brothers and I are queer. The reason I've been so upset is because my youngest brother's coming out has seemed to tip some balance I've felt. What is this, I asked myself, Perversion City? I have been asking around to find out if other people have queer company in their nuclear families but many don't. Some do. I would love to hear from those who do, and that's why I wanted to write this.

I know this subject can stand to be opened a bit. It certainly has pushed my homophobic buttons and forced me to cope with all my feelings around this. I encourage readers to look at your feelings around “Very Queer” families, and support your friends who come from them. It's hard enough being lesbian myself, let alone feel like I have to account for my siblings and parents as well.

In looking at my homophobic reactions I have learned many things. The first thing I had to admit was that when I used to con-

sole my little brother that he had a lifetime to choose, I wasn't just trying to relieve his anxiety; I must have had a stake in the outcome. That hurt to admit. I still believe that he may choose women someday, and I hope at some level he

about the family. I think it's fine that I value this kind of “old-fashioned” commitment, but I now understand more clearly that I needed them to be kind of “normal” in order to accept them. Would I have felt as accepting if

As a family we represent the variety of feelings that people can have: straight, lesbian, bi-sexual, and gay. We really aren't weird, just varied.

does still, but I'll keep that counsel to myself now.

I used to use my older brothers' relationships as the pillar of my acceptance for them, and for us all being from the same family. They have been monogamously involved with the same men for ten and fifteen years respectively. My friends were always impressed by this, too, and helped me feel okay

they were involved with men I didn't respect; if they were promiscuous; if one wasn't really bisexual, and just happened to be in love with this man whom he happened to want to spend his life with; if there weren't the youngest male to carry on the family name? (The last was really my father's

continued on page 11

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New Faces, New Albums, New

By Maida Tilchen

Spring always brings many women's music performers on tours all over the country, and lots of new records released in time for all those concerts and festivals. This spring there are first albums by two of the oldest-timers in women's music: **Diane Lindsay** and **Sue Fink**. Many relative newcomers have also released first albums: **Linda Hirschorn**, **Kay Weaver**, **Ann Reed**, **Debbie Saunders**, **Sylvia Kohan**, Olivia's new artist **Deirdre McCalla**, and the **Ms.DeMeanor** and **Reel World** bands. Long-time friends of women's music lovers, **Cris Williamson**, **Ginni Clemens** and **Gayle Marie** have new offerings. A unique new album is "**The International Sweethearts of Rhythm**," a women of color band from the 1940s. **Romanovsky and Phillips**, two gay men, have released an album of interest to lesbians. This article will also tell you about a wonderful new magazine of women's music and culture called **Hot Wire**.

Although all the new albums are good technically, I do have qualms about their widespread lack of topical or political topics. Songs about love, friendship, and the earth continue to dominate women's music in the '80s. The musical styles are catching up with the times — new wave has clearly hit women's music this year — but lyrics have gotten more conservative, closeted and limited to the narrow realm of issues that can be heard on even the most mainstream of radio playlists.

This melodic march back into the closet seems to be a reaction by musicians to the expectations and outright demands that were put on them by lesbian audiences in the '70s. As artists, they have justifiably claimed the right to express what is meaningful to them. But the result has been music in which lesbian feminists see less and less of themselves, their lives, and their struggles. This situation has reached its lowest point, I hope, with the recent release of an album by **Alicia Bridges** on Second Wave, a subsidiary of Olivia Records. Bridges had a disco hit a few years ago called "**I Love the Nightlife**." On her Second Wave album, **Hocus Pocus**, she sings:

Hoo-doo gonna get you — voo-doo
I've been elected to fix every sucker like you
And I will
Say I will
Under the cover of darkness.

The lyrics are directed at a man who finds a lonely person and "tear(s) their heart in two," but this amalgamation of racist, homophobic lyrics within a context of sex

and violence is a pathetic place for Olivia to be in 1985 (or ever!). Are they thumbing their noses at the women who have supported them for all these years? Most of the lyrics on the record are about a woman losing control of her emotions. It is the opposite of empowering to women. The music to accompany these lyrics is the standard '80s combination of disco and new wave, the kind of stuff that flows through a night of dancing without leaving a trace. Just for the record, the musicians on this album were all men, and most of the technical roles were done by men. The back cover, showing a Black woman in the shadows of two white women, certainly reiterates the racism of the lyrics. I have heard that Olivia did not distribute the EP version of "**Under the Cover of Darkness**" through its usual women's music distributors, but gave it instead to dance music distributors in certain areas. I hope they did it out of some sense of respect for the women's music distributors' values.

The Alicia Bridges album offended and horrified me, and it really points up the lack of accountability in women's music. But music is one place where people can literally "vote with their feet," and I believe that lesbians will be looking for music that is unequivocally directed to them. Of the fourteen albums reviewed here, only one, **Convicted** by Ms.DeMeanor, an inter-racial, apparently working-class band from Ohio, is out of the closet all the way. To me this says that women's music is misjudging the needs and tolerance of its audience. If there is a lesbian "garage band" movement out there, it is probably aligning itself with new wave and not women's music. For years lesbians have been writing about their broad range of lives, experiences, bodies, and emotions; meanwhile women's music seems to be more and more homogeneous and self-protecting.

I found it very difficult to review the albums included here, because as a group they felt so overwhelmingly like showcases for individual artists' talents and nothing more. I had no sense of the vibrancy and urgency of the political movement from which they came. At the same time that I say this, I am also reminding myself of the kind of miracle that has brought about **Debbie Saunders'** album, one of the newcomers reviewed here. As a blind woman raised in institutions, she would most likely be as disenfranchised as many worthy musicians. Instead, she has released a virtually all-women's album into our women-owned and -controlled network. In 1985, there's something there in women's music, and something not there.

MsDeMeanor is a Dayton, Ohio lesbian band that put out a record called **Convicted** in 1983 which has been sadly overlooked. How long has it been since you've heard songs like:

you call me crazy lezzie...
don't you know loving women just makes me strong
rock and roll lesbian
we got a lot of lesbian friends

They also have a dance song with a backup chorus going "dykes dancin'!, dykes dancin'!" And then there's "Queer Song":

you call us queer
queen, faggot and dyke
You get what you give
You say we're demented
sick and crazy too
Don't look now but
We're laughing at you.

And how about: "(Let's Do Something) Politically Incorrect":

Spent a lot of time
raising my consciousness
But some other inner feelings
Got me in a mess.

That should give the general idea! There hasn't been an album quite as raw as this one since the earliest days of women's music. It reminds me of early British punk and its stripped-down-to-the-essentials protest of the over-commercialization of mainstream music. Will this be the start of some back-to-basics for lesbian music?

Musically, this band does not sound punk, but has that women's rock and roll band sound you often hear when local bands play local gigs. One group the album brings to mind is **Bebe K'Roche**, although **Ms.DeMeanor** lacks the Latin sound of that group.



The MsDeMeanor band: Dotti Moseley, Dana Peebles, Fran Kellye and Jake Rude (below)

You're chasing every skirt in town
the girls all know you're a flirt...
you're just like the boy next door
they used to warn me about...
I thought this kind of love was different...
old formulas should not apply
you're hardly just the average guy...
and so on in that vein, until a surprise final chorus:
she's just like the boy next door
they used to warn me about



Kay Weaver

I also liked several others on the album, including a fine dance number called "**Fired Up**":

I've tried to cool down, put ice in my veins
Freeze all the feelin' inside
But I can't resist hot places like this
It's a passion that I've never tried.

Most of the songs were written by Jeri Waxenberg, some are collaborations between Waxenberg and Kay Weaver and women's music rocker **Carol MacDonald**. This album's jacket is wonderful — a photo of Kay Weaver posing a la **Marlene Dietrich** in a pinstripe suit.

A major lesbian album this season is **Ann Reed's Room and Board**. Ann Reed is based in the Minneapolis area, and has been a big hit at the National Women's Music Festival in Bloomington, Indiana. The album starts right off with the very explicit song, "**Jaynie**" by Parish.

When I see Jaynie
& Jaynie sees me...
I want her to love me
nobody but me

Reed is a terrific lyricist. This album is full of gem lines like "call it love with all its fuses/when lights grow dim grab your excuses" and "her thoughts just astound you/she's hard to define...she gives you a definite maybe/she's just the woman you love."

The songs are backed up by very listenable acoustic arrangements, especially on that wonderful old chestnut of a song, "**Willow Weep For Me**."

Return of the Sweethearts

A most unusual album is **International Sweethearts of Rhythm**, billed as "the hottest women's band of the 1940s." The Sweethearts originally formed at a school for orphaned and poor girls in 1937. Within a few years the group, all of mixed or Afro-American parentage, was touring nationally. Although occasionally professionals joined the band, its stability was maintained because the orphaned young women had no other homes, and by the fact that they were often isolated by segregationist practices in communities where they traveled.

As the Sweethearts grew older, they felt exploited by the school, and eventually they mutinied, continuing the group with their own management and forming a communal residence called "the Sweetheart House." As historian **Rosetta Reitz** points out, "The Sweethearts were an early example of harmonious communal living on a cross-cultural basis." As World War II created many new opportunities for women, the Sweethearts thrived



Sweethearts trumpeters, 1944: Ray Carter, Johnnie Ma Stansbury, Toby Butler and Tiny Davis (seated)

Be sure to check out the photos on the album's cover and sleeve. These women look like your local dyke bar band, complete with leather jackets and black t-shirts, and some tough-looking faces. Hey, this album is blatant! It has a lot to say, to lesbians and to the society. It gives me hope that women's music, and particularly lesbian music, will continue at a grassroots level to present a real voice and alternative for lesbian musicians.

Linda Hirschorn is a new name to me — but her excellent first album, **Skies Ablaze**, is filled with familiar names, including **Suzanne Shanbaum** and **Nancy Vogl**, formerly of the **Berkeley Women's Music Collective**, and **Carolyn Brandy of Alive!**. Back-up vocalists include **Laurie Lewis**, who is a fine West Coast songwriter and musician. The range of topics on the album — Nicaragua, Karen Silkwood, Emma Goldman, and nuclear weapons — makes it one of the most political albums of recent years. One song I particularly took to heart is "**Mayn Rue-Plats**," which is a classic protest song of the Jewish American labor movement. Hirschorn sings it in Yiddish, and the musical arrangement of its twisting and affecting melody is particularly well done, especially by **Tay Holden** on heart-rending viola solos. Yiddish songs require maximum schmaltz, and this one gets full treatment **Alix Dobkin** used to perform this in concert, and except for **Alix** and the Boston group **Libana**, I can't recall hearing any other Yiddish or even Jewish songs in women's music. Indeed, I have found it quite distressing when performers such as **Holly Near** do many songs of the partisans of the Spanish Civil War, and none of the songs of the Jewish resistance of the same period.

This album sounds very good, has many good songs on it, and has a particularly beautiful cover design by **Carol Ehrlich**. If you're looking for a new album of women's music that is acoustic, political, and memorable, **Linda Hirschorn's Skies Ablaze** will certainly satisfy you.

Kay Weaver, accompanied by a mostly male band, has put out one of the best albums lately, and one that is more explicitly lesbian than most of the others reviewed here. I wish I knew more about this artist, although the music certainly speaks for itself. **One Fine Day** is a terrific album, and the best use of new wave/technopop styles of any of these albums.

Of Weaver's two songs of particular interest to lesbians, the title song, "**One Fine Day**," is a pleasant tribute to **Emily Dickinson**, **Willa Cather**, and **Emma Goldman**. "**Just Like the Boy Next Door**" is more unusual. In a frantic, new wave style, it tells the following:

New Wave for Women's Music?

and after the war played tours in Europe for occupation forces — sometimes for Black American soldiers in segregated sections. The band lasted until the '50s brought off the bandstands and back into the home.

The Sweethearts jacket includes several pages of fascinating stories about the group's history, plus many photos. Their whole story is quite incredible in itself, and also exposes other obscure facts about women in music. For example, a precursor of the Sweethearts was the Ladies Orchestra of Chelsea, Mass., an Afro-American group begun in 1884 that "played the best halls and parties in and around Boston" for ten years. Another group mentioned is the Boston Fadettes, begun in 1882 and lasting 32 years. Perhaps someone out there can tell GCN readers more about these groups. In general, according to Rosetta Reitz, who wrote the liner notes and produced this album, all-women's bands were seen as novelties, not as serious musicians, and have been disregarded by music historians. And women of color bands were given the least opportunities for permanence of records and film, and so are most lost to history.

The liner notes of the album are a fascinating social history. What about the record inside? It's that extremely high-energy, toetapping swing music that quickly has you wondering where the closest dance floor is. It's wonderful to hear such expertly played music and picture all these women producing it! The recordings are taken from radio broadcasts done in the mid-'40s, and there is a suitably enthusiastic announcer introducing most of the songs. Several of the songs have lyrics, such as "I ain't good looking and I don't have waist-length hair... I may be big, but baby have no fear, I can climb a hill without the shift in gear." One song, "Jump Children," sounds like a precursor of the Van Halen and Pointer Sisters versions of the song "Jump."

A documentary about the Sweethearts is in the works; meanwhile, this unique album is sure to pique your interest and satisfy your immediate fingersnapping needs. It would make a particularly fine gift for anyone of any age — this music has got to be irresistible to anyone but the extremely dead. The "Hottest Women's Band of the 1940s" can steam the '80s easily, that's for sure.



Old and New Friends

Diane Lindsay is a long-time women's music back-up performer who is finally releasing her first solo album. As a bass player, she's played on records and toured with most everyone in women's music. She also wrote the song "Sweet Darlin' Woman" which Meg Christian has popularized. On her solo album, Lindsay has written all the songs, and they go through a variety of moods and styles. I was impressed by the consistent themes of the songs. Lindsay has something to say about various types of addictions — in fact, one of the dedications on the albums is to Bill W., the founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. One song, "Save Me," lays out what she's talking about:

Whoa Lord, save me from myself...
break the booze on the ground...
throw my stash in the trash...
keep your riches and fame...
Hide the sugar and sweets
sexy strangers I meet
...whoa lord, save me from myself.

Other songs are more subtle, but the theme remains. In contrast to many women's music love songs, in which the joy and pain of love seem to be the parameters, Lindsay goes further by questioning assumptions about love. For example, in "Throw Me a Rope," she says:

I've been out chasin' after love
— it's almost all I think of —
From people who are chasin' after love themselves...
Tonight I need to find some peace
inside myself.

Another song of particular interest is "Hold Me Easy," giving a child's view of an alcoholic parent:

Sing a song to help me calm down
I'm still shaking
I'm still shaking

Hold me mom...
I guess the liquor set him off...
does he really mean to hurt me?

While several women's music artists have discussed their involvement with alcohol and alcoholism-related programs, Diane Lindsay is the most explicit about this topic in her songs themselves. With the widespread involvement of lesbians and gay men in AA-related programs, this album is certainly in touch with the times.

Ginni Clemens seems to have a new style and identity with each new album.

I've never been to a Ginni Clemmens concert that didn't turn into a magical, memorable evening. This doesn't always come through on her records, but *Lopin' Along Through the Cosmos* — if you can deal with the cloying title and jacket design — is a great introduction to Ginni's warmth and earnestness. The album is clearly designed with cross-over to the New Age audience in mind, but the excellent selection of songs shows she's still got her heart in the women's community.

This album has the strongest selection of songs of any of the albums reviewed here. There's Ginni's renditions of the classics "The Rose" and "Testimony"; a wonderful children's song about discrimination called "I'm a Little Cookie"; several songs about finding inner peace; a song for liberating men called "Let the Woman in You Come Through"; and a beautiful goddess song, "Ladyo." Kay Gardner plays flute on "Ladyo," another treat on this fine record. Ginni only does two original songs, both very New Age ("you can just relax/there is no dying/you can just relax and be my friend").

There are better voices around than Ginni Clemens', albums with higher tech production, and jackets with more sophisticated design, but there aren't any with more heart. If you like your music highly human, this is the one to listen to.

Sue Fink's first album, *Big Promise*, is being hailed as a breakthrough for women's music, because it is predominantly new wave and high tech. It actually has a combination of styles, including spoken punk vocals with lyrics like "the end is near, friend," and terrific synthesizer sound effects, including giant heavenly choirs and a prolonged nuclear bomb explosion. Rather abruptly, on side two, the style switches to softer, melodic songs that showcase Sue Fink's very fine voice. This gives the album a strange character, as if the nuclear explosion gradually turned into ripples of mellow vibes.

I found this album hard to judge, because I'm not at all familiar with new wave and find it numbing to listen to. But "Big Promise" is obviously not intended for the acoustically-pure crowd, but rather may be aimed at building some bridges between women's music as we know and love it and the increasingly expanding women's new wave/punk movement, which also foment feminism and presents an alternative to the big record companies. In any case, if you're one of those folks who finds women's music hopelessly behind the times, Sue Fink may provide what you've been missing.

An album by a fine singer with a terrific back-up band is *A Shot in the Dark* by **Debbie Saunders**. Saunders has a great voice for blues, and on this first album she shows her talents in a collection of mostly up-beat, bluesy numbers by songwriters including June Millington, Randy Newman and Stevie Wonder. Backing her up are some of the finest musicians in women's music, including Mary Watkins, Jan Martinelli, Carolyn Brandy, and Suzanne Shanbaum. Sapphron Obois, playing saxes, is outstanding. Her solos really power the whole record. The album was produced by Mary Watkins, giving this white artist an overall sound steeped in Black musical styles. According to an article on Debbie Saunders in *Hot Wire* (Vol. 1, No. 2), she has been blind since birth, and grew up in a series of foster homes and institutions. She has a background of streetsinging with Black women, rhythm and blues, and gospel. In the mid-'70s, she played with the midwestern women's band Airhart, later hitchhiking to California when the band split up. There



Debbie Saunders

she played back-up for many women's music efforts.

Debbie Saunders is a strong blues singer, and this album includes a gorgeous rendition of Stevie Wonder's "Ribbon in the Sky." I know this is one album I'll be playing often.



Deirdre McCalla

Deirdre McCalla's *Don't Doubt It* is the first album by a new artist on the Olivia label in quite a while. Deirdre is backed up by many Olivia "regulars": Teresa Trull, Vicki Randle, Linda Tillery, Mary Watkins, among others. The production on the album, done by Trull, is extremely well done — each of these songs seems to have been arranged to its full potential. There's no one song on the album that really grabs me, but all the songs are given maximum presentation. Some of Deirdre's songs, such as "Home in My Heart," sound like they started in life as acoustic folk songs, but jazzier arrangements here give them an interesting new character.

The songs are mostly written by Deirdre McCalla. They focus on love, breakups, friendship, and ecology. She doesn't use much imagery or topicality, but describes universal situations in abstract terms.

Cris Williamson's new album, *Prairie Fire*, is a concept album about the cowboy and Native American history of the western U.S. Never having lived out west, it took me some listening to appreciate places like the "Last Chance Saloon," events like "Colorado Dustbowl Days," and phenomena like "Prairie Fire," which are a meaningfully ethnic heritage to Cris, a native of South Dakota. Hollywood has certainly spoiled all of us for seeing the rich cultural history of the U.S. West, and this effort of Cris's to give a fresh presentation to some very overworked archetypes is kind of a jolt to one's preconceptions.

In any case I suspect that, like myself, most Cris Williamson fanatics will buy and love anything she does; the voice and the melodies are the main attraction. If anything, the fault of this album is that the lyrics actually seem to mean something specific, instead of Cris's usual vague, suggestive imagery that stands up so well to endless listening. The strongest song on the album, sure to be another classic, is "Don't Lose Heart," a song about finding "a family of friends," a truly lovely concept in a beautiful song. Although it was written in 1984, it's so quintessentially Cris that it seems as if she must have been singing it to us for the last ten years. Cris's back-up musicians include Barbara Higbie, Bonnie Raitt, and John McCutcheon.

Gayle Marie and her incredibly pure voice are back in a second album called *Double Talk*. Produced by Mary Watkins and backed up by Watkins, Jan Martinelli, Bonnie Johnson and a few male musicians, this is a nice showcase not only for Gayle Marie's singing, but also for her songwriting talents on six of the ten songs. Gayle Marie tends to fixate on love as the only topic worth singing about, but this album also includes one song, "Doubletalk," about the absurdities of bureaucracy and politicians. It includes background sounds of politicians giving speeches. It's a novel approach, although it was rather disconcerting to hear Reagan's voice on my stereo. Again, this is an album where it's the singer, not the song, and if you enjoy an Ann Murray or Helen Reddy type of singer, Gayle Marie is a lovely, woman-identified con-tender.

If you like traditional, Appalachian music, *In Good Time* by the **Reel World String Band** will probably delight you. It's an all-women's band that formed in 1977 to play bluegrass and traditional music of the members' home states of Texas, Kansas, and Kentucky. Their songs are very political and feminist, combining traditional themes of coal mining conditions with songs of women's roles in that milieu.

A first album by two gay men, **Romanovsky and Phillips**, will be of interest to gay men, and I think it will have more appeal to lesbians than any other men's albums I've heard. Very much influenced by women's

continued on page 10

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New Waves for Women

Continued from page 9

music, it's an album of clever songs that seem to pick up on the experiences and emotions of '80s lesbian/gay culture without being heavyhanded. For example, there's "(I Can Have) Attitude":

*I can be aloof
I can be rude
I can have
attitude.*

Other songs include "Womb Envy," about a man who wants to have a baby ("If it's been in test tubes/then why not inside of me?"); "Cat and Mouse," about sexual chases; a song about nuclear war; and others on standard gay male themes such as closet cases and sports-oppression.

Of special interest to lesbians are "Paint By Numbers," a song for Frances Farmer, and "She Has a Thing (For Men Who Love Men)," a song about a woman who endures a lot of disappointment ("His lips said I love you/but his eyes said I need more) on her path to coming out as a lesbian ("She finally found the love that she'd been looking for in men"). The title song, "I Thought You'd Be Taller," about the disillusionments of love, will have appeal for everyone:

*And I thought you'd be taller
I thought you'd be rich...
I thought you'd be happy
And never complain...*

Romanovsky and Phillips sound like Simon and Garfunkel with their intricate harmonizing. Paul Phillips' tender voice really beautifies this sweet album.



Ann Reed

New Women's Music Magazine!

Hot Wire is a new national magazine of women's music and culture which should prove indispensable to all women's music fans. Something of a successor to *Paid My Dues*, this 64-page journal is filled with interviews with musicians, how-to articles about music, its technology and its business aspects; and all sorts of unexpected features, such as an essay by Ann Bannon about fiction writing. Issue #2, which came out in March, contained a unique surprise: a four-song "floppy disk" record came stapled in each copy. Both issues have also included plenty of terrific photos taken at concerts and festivals.

If you like women's music, you'll want to see *Hot Wire*. It almost feels like a lesbian version of *People* magazine — with the emphasis on information, not gossip. I particularly enjoyed Shanta Nurullah's fascinating

historical article about Mary Lou Williams, a Black jazz pianist who owned her own record company in the 1960s, and who did much to promote jazz as a cultural expression of Black people. There's also an unusual article about a lesbian band that has been performing in Montana in recent years. Interviews with or articles by many of the new faces in women's music — including Toshi Reagon, Ann Read, Debbie Saunders, and Reel World String Band — are included with pieces on Linda Tillery, Kate Clinton, Kay Gardner, and other more familiar faces.



Linda Hirschorn

You should be able to purchase most of these records from your local women's music outlets or distributors. If this isn't possible, you can order them from the addresses listed below, or from Lady-slipper Records at P.O. Box 3124, Durham, NC 27705.

Cris Williamson, Prairie Fire, Olivia Records.

Deirdre McCalla, Don't Doubt It, Olivia Records.

Alicia Bridges, Hocus Pocus, and Under the Cover of Darkness/Not Ready Yet, EP, Second Wave Records.

All Olivia and Second Wave Records can be ordered from them at 4400 Market St., Oakland, CA 94608.

Ann Reed, Room and Board, Iceberg Records, 207 E. Buffalo St., Suite 501, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

Kay Weaver, One Fine Day, Circe Records, 256 S. Robertson Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211.

Romansky and Phillips, I Thought You'd Be Taller, Fresh Fruit Records, 2269 Market St., #301, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Diane Lindsay, Open Up, Lady-slipper Records, PO Box 3214, Durham, NC 27705.

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HOT WIRE

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Queer Families

Continued from page 7

beef at one time, not mine.) I have realized the extent to which I accept homosexuality only with a certain value structure. Since having to look at my youngest brother's coming out, I now feel more willing to accept differences within lifestyles.

My family members have all had very different reactions to all the queeriness amongst us. I have

but my preference seems to be for women. The concept from my younger days, that "one falls in love with the person, not the gender," is a bit stretched, but it still sounds good to me, as a utopian fantasy of some sort. I guess I'll never come close enough to the "bi" end of the continuum to act on this, though. As a family, however, we represent the variety

My brothers have been monogamously involved with the same men for ten and fifteen years respectively. My friends were always impressed by this, and helped me feel okay, too. I needed them to be kind of "normal" in order to accept them.

found that they have been able to be supportive to my choice and have erased my homophobic reaction about my youngest brother. My sister went through her "freakout" when I came out to here. As the fourth child born, she even wondered for a while why she wasn't a lesbian. By the time our brother came out, she figured "What the hell." She's at a place where she'll just love and accept him for who he is. So is my mother. They have been very reassuring.

I've thought a lot about *why* so many of us in my family are acting on our attractions to people of the same sex. I have felt very mixed about this. I've felt at times like we are a model liberated family. Other times I've asked all the old oppressive psychological questions about why we are as we are. Weak/strong mother? Weak/strong father? Was it the alcoholism of my father? Was there some kind of "compulsory homosexuality" at play concerning my brothers?

I've decided that these questions can never be answered, and aren't even all that important to focus on. We are who we are. It is more interesting, and helpful in terms of building pride for me to look at the degree of acceptance in my family, and to continue to challenge attitudes everywhere so that the ac-

of degrees of feelings that people can have. Straight, lesbian, bisexual, and gay. We really aren't weird, just varied. This experience has been painful in the context of our oppressive world, but enriching, too.

There is so much more I could



write about. I'd love to talk about the reactions of everyone to all the coming-outs. There are many stories to be told of family gatherings and the introductions of "outlaws" to my parents. The ways that we all relate to our unique extended family structure is fun indeed. As for the future,

I want to be gutsy and out in the world. I want to contribute my share of risk-taking so that those who follow will find more acceptance in this hate-filled world.

ceptance grows. I can ignore the "why's" because people in my family are pretty healthy and happy; if we weren't, it would be a different story.

I believe that most human beings are capable of feeling sexually attracted to those of their same sex. By the time I was 12, my oldest brother modeled this for me by feeling free enough in our home to show affection towards his lover. He had been out to my parents for five years by then. By the time I got to college I believed that people should fall in love with whomever they fell in love with, regardless of gender. I had also had crushes on a couple of girls in high school. It took me going through the experience of being an angry feminist, and also of sleeping with women, before I eventually emerged preferring women as lovers. Today I am not a "man-hating" woman in the slightest,

there's the promise of lesbian-born and -raised babies for my parents to grandparent, and many more family times to share. I've opened up this can of worms and I hope many others will. Queer families of all kinds seem to be on the rise these days. More power to us all.

We invite readers to submit articles for Coming Out, a series in which lesbians and gay men tell the stories of their individual sexual, social, emotional and political emergence. The articles should be no longer than 1500 words and, if possible, should be typed (double-spaced, please). Send to Coming Out, GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th floor, Boston, MA 02111.

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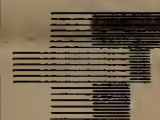
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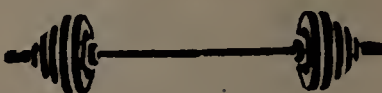
for the last few years, it's also been the best. Even when they didn't know how to fix everything, they never cheated anybody or covered up. So, over the years, they kept learning new makes and new techniques, and now can repair about anything. Their specialty is still the preproduction equipment on Dodge Darts and Plymouth Valiants, those classics of reliability. But they're ready for anything and did most of the work on the antique vehicles for the movie "The Brinks Job."

(Reprinted from Real Paper, "Best of Boston," Fall, 1980)

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THE
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New Waves for Women

continued from page 10

Sue Fink, Big Promise, *Ladyslipper Records*.

Ms. DeMeanor, Convicted, *Ladyslipper Records*.

Linda Hirschorn, Skies Ablaze, *Oyster Albums, Box 3929, Berkeley, CA 94703*.

Debbie Saunders, A Shot in the Dark, *Step by Step Records, 1431 5th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94122*.

Ginni Clemens, Lopin Along Through the Cosmos, *Flying Fish Records, 1304 W. Schubert, Chicago, IL 60614*.

Reel World String Band, In Good Time, *Flying Fish Records*.

Sylvia Kohan, Finally Real, *Dancing Cat Records, Box 639, Santa Cruz, CA 95061*.

Gayle Marie, Double Talk, *Iceberg Records*.

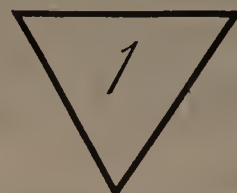
International Sweethearts of Rhythm, *Rosetta Records, 115 West 16th St., NY, NY 10011*.

Hot Wire, *Not Just a Stage, 1321 W. Rosedale, Chicago, IL 60660*.

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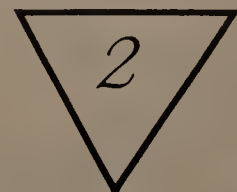
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Porn Debate Continues

continued from page 6

literature might be affected by this type of ordinance, Leidholdt stated her judgment that the book *Show Me!* by Will McBride should be considered child pornography. The book was designed to teach young children about their bodies and sex, and includes explicit photos of naked children touching themselves and each other. In answer to a question by GCN, Leidholdt explained that she believed the children were photographed in degrading positions and that the responsible adults were coercive in requesting the children to pose in those positions. Another questioner asked if Judy

Chicago's *Dinner Party*, which featured representations of isolated female genitalia, would qualify as pornography under the proposed law. Leidholdt was unsure, but indicated that was a possibility.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the debate was what was not discussed. Both speakers disliked pornography; their disagreement was on whether the damage attributed to it is worse than that which results from censorship. Neither speaker discussed the possibility that sexually explicit fantasy material might be a positive resource for women.

Have you seen *Drifting* and *Each Other?* Well, don't miss their Boston premiere at the **Lesbian/Gay Film Festival to benefit GCN** on June 5, 8pm, at the Orson Welles in Cambridge. Show us your love! See great movies! Make out in the dark theater!

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CALL 641-3095
M-F 9-6/Sat 12-5

HOUSING SOUGHT

Quiet, fun-loving, L 22 seeks friendly, independent roommates/apt. near T. June 1. Can pay up to \$300 including utilities. Call 648-7612 (45)

NEED ROOM IMMEDIATELY
3-4 NIGHTS/WEEK 2GF 40+ living out of town, working in Boston. Please call & leave message 926-5607. ps: I am a cig smoker/non-veg/chocolate freak. To know us is to love us. GF/GM resp. (45)

GCN F staff member looking for an apt. or house to share with 1 or 2 others, M or F, pref. 30+ but let's talk. Camb./Som.(would consider JP). Under \$200/mo. Ask for Pam at 426-4469. (c)

LF couple moving to Boston mid-July seeks 1-2 brdrms in lesbian househld or separate apt. \$400/mo max. Semi-veg, nonsmkrs. Write Sylvan Rainwater, PO Box 4387, Portland OR 97208 or call 503/235-7711. (46)

SUBLETS

CAMBRIDGE SUMMER SUBLET
Furnished co-op sublet from June 1 to July 31. \$443. Pleasant neighborhood; nice apt. one br and study, 4 rooms. Call 542-1384 days; 876-1501 eves. Ask for Peggy L. (44)

3 LF's seek 4th for summer sublet in spacious 4 br Porter Sq. house near T. We are non-smoking, mostly veg., and have 2 cats. Rent \$220 491-4005 (45)

SUMMER SUBLET
GM seeks roommate for 2 br South End apt. No smokers, avail. 6/1, \$310/mo incl. heat. Call 262-4429 (evenings). Top floor exposed brick, Prvt roof deck. (44)

DAVIS SQUARE
Sublet 1 br in 3 br apt. with 2 gw's June-Sept with option for entire apt In September. Bedroom lge sunny with porch-good for a couple. Near T. Call 776-4277 eves and weekends. (4)

Sublet 1 br in 2 br spacious sunny Somerville apt, porch share with LF June-Sept. 1 (dates negotiable) \$240/mo incl. utilities. 623-0703 (45)

HOUSES FOR SALE

DELICIOUS MAINE HIDEAWAY FOR SALE IMMEDIATELY
25 minutes Ogunquit/mts. view/granite fireplace/3 acres/horse country/easy maintenance. Sale by owners \$70,000 Call (617) 354-5981 or (207) 324-1640. (47)

APARTMENTS

Dorchester-Ashmont 2-bedroom near T \$460+ heat and utilities. 1st, last and security dep. 288-8511. (44)

WORKING FIREPLACE
Professional woman with condo on Brookline/Brighton line has 2 bedroom apartment/condo with custom kitchen, wicker porch. Only serious need apply. Contact: send written inquiries to Elizabeth Brooks 501 Shirley St. Winthrop MA 02152 (45)

RESORTS

GREENHOPE FARM
Unique all-woman country space. Beautiful post and beam farmhouse, cozy and clean. Gourmet veg. cooking, home-made breads, cheese and yogurt. Baby horse, goats and ducklings. From skiing to skinny dipping, we're open year round. 3½ hrs. from Boston. (802) 533-7772

GABRIEL'S
Guest rooms and apartments. Centrally located. Hot tub, garden patio, cable tv, coffee. 104 Bradford St. Provincetown, MA 02657. Reservations: (617) 487-3232. Open year round.

CHECK'ER OUT AT THE CHECK'ER INN
Dbl rms, coffee by fireside, pkg, apts also avail, 1 blk bay, open year round. 487-9029, 25 Winthrop St, P'town, MA 02657

BRINLEY VICTORIAN INN
Explore Newport but let us harbor you with warm & friendly service. romantic Victorian decor. fresh flowers. cont. brkfst. (401)849-7645 (13/1)

VERMONT GUESTHOUSE
Bed + Cont Bkfst for Lesbians and Gay Men in a country village house 2 hrs fr Bos. Yr-round. Nr lakes, hikes, skiing. Dave + Mike (802)348-7840.

A SPRING TIME FANCY
A special place for friends and lovers. Secluded setting on 100 acres at the end of a country lane. Beautiful mountain views. Charming guest rooms. Gracious common areas. Crackling fires at night, peace and quiet always. Come see what you've been missing. The Highlands Inn, Box 118G, Bethlehem, NH 03574, (603) 869-3978. Grace & Judi, Innkeepers. (44)

BED & BREAKFAST IN N.Y.
Enjoy a decadent weekend in a charming, lesbian owned, N.Y. brownstone — only 1 subway stop from Manhattan. Be pampered by having breakfast served in bed, and sipping a complimentary bottle of champagne on arrival. For more information, call (718)625-2653, THE RADCLIFFE HALL. (13/36)

SUMMER RENTALS

PROVINCETOWN WATERFRONT APARTMENTS
Furn. apts. in quiet West End—ideal for lovers—by week, month, now through June and after Labor Day. Telephone: (617) 487-2771 or 262-7396 rates: from \$360/wk w/discounts. Ref. required. (47)

WOMEN'S LAKESHORE PRIVACY IN CENTRAL MAINE
Secluded seductive cabin — 3 bedrooms stone fireplace, loons at night. June-Sept, S. Roberts No. 6EE 758 Pelham Pkwy, S Bronx, NY 10462 (212) 823-6831 (45)

PROVINCETOWN COTTAGE
2 bdrm sleeps 4 liv-kit combo 2 min to private beach avail May-Sept July + Aug \$400 wk Tel eve (617) 373-1955 Carole (46)

SUMMER VACATION
Gay male 18+ older. Private Island 40 miles north of Boston. Day. Week. Month, Season. References required. Call 595-9737. (45)

SERVICES

INTERIOR PAINTING & RENOVATION
First class workmanship, free estimates 723-3641 David evenings. (44)

COUNSELING—PSYCHOTHERAPY
For individuals or couples, long or short term. Reasonable rates, sliding scale. John Graves, 266-2069. Formerly 6 years with HCHS. (35)

SISTER SWEEPS CHIMNEY SWEEPS
Unless you have electric heat, your chimney needs cleaning. Let us prepare you for a safe winter at our off season rate. We guarantee no soot. Call evenings 288-3137 (44)

TROUBLED GAYS-LESBIANS
Psychotherapy helps after you're out. There are still the usual feelings of depression, loneliness and just plain misery. Call Ruth Chessman (617) 964-2510 (49)

GAY MEN'S THERAPY GROUP
Openings. Group focus is on intimacy, gay identity, relationships. Individual therapy also available. Sliding fee. Call Francis Giambrone 628-6988.

WOMEN'S BARTER NETWORK
Short on cash, but have lots you'd like to trade for your needs? Women's Barter Network is a non-profit, nationwide barter referral system for women and women's organizations/businesses. Send SASE for details to: Women's Barter Network, Box 712, Wabash, Indiana 46992. (62)

TRAVEL AGENCIES

FOREX TRAVEL
Phone 482-2900
76 Arlington St.
at Boston Park Plaza

ORGANIZATIONS

HETEROSEXISM, RACISM
Sexism, anti-Semitism, multicultural issues. Workshops by national consultants for your organization (municipal, professional, political, educational) or business. Contact Equity Institute in Amherst, MA at (413)256-6902. Co-directors Carole Lannigan Johnson, J.D., and Joan Lester, Ed.D. (?)

Lobbying and fighting legally for realistic approaches to social interaction-especially for same-sex oriented youth who cannot relate easily or safely to their peers as heterosexual youth can. Info + sample bulletin \$2.00-Annual Membership/Subscription \$20.00. Reality Inc. P.O. Box 73 Paramus, NJ 07653-0073.

D.O.B.
Suppt orgnzn for lesbians, 1151 Mass Ave, Camb, Old Bap Chr. Raps evry Tues, Thurs 8pm. Special raps for 35+; parents; yngr wmn; baby bmrs; singles; coming-out; issues forum. All 8pm. Mnthly events, outing club, library. Info: 661-3633. All women invited to participate. (4)

LESBIANS
Are you Lesbian, Bisexual or unsure? Looking for a group to go to? Come join us at BAGLY.

Call Tony, 497-8282. (13/32)

GAY LESBIAN AND JEWISH?
Am Tikva welcomes you. Activities include religious observances, discussions, potluck dinners, folk dancing, etc. For events, check GCN Calendar. Call (617) 782-8894 or write PO Box 11, Camb, MA 02238.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS
Gay is OK! SDA Kinship International, Inc., since 1976, is a support group of several hundred gay/lesbian Adventists, present and former, in local chapters nationwide. Ask for brochure. Box 1233-L, Los Angeles, CA 90078. 213-876-2076. (49)

HAD ENOUGH religious homophobia?

WE ARE
Gay And Lesbian Atheists
Write to GALA for information and a free copy of the GALA REVIEW, P.O. Box 14142, San Francisco, CA 94114

N AMER MAN/BOY LOVE ASSOC
A support group for intergenerational relationships. For more information send \$1 to: NAMBLA-GCNAD, PO Box 174, New York, NY 10018. (v. 13, no.22)

NASHUA AREA GAYS meet on Mondays at 8:00 pm. For info write Nashua Area Gays. PO Box 885, Nashua. NH 03060. (40)

GCN SPECIALS

Gay Community News needs help on Friday nights mailing the paper to our subscribers. Come and help: It's easy, it's fun, it's a good way to meet people, and it's a good way to get involved with your community's paper. Just come anytime after 6PM to 167 Tremont Street, 5th floor (between the Bylston and Park Street "T" stops). If the door is locked, buzz us on the GCN Intercom located outside the door. If you have any questions, call Marcos at 426-4469. (c)

ARTISTS ILLUSTRATORS DESIGNERS
GCN needs some new and exciting graphics to grace our covers and features stories. Call (or write) now and ask for Jean. If Jean is not in leave your name and number and what type of art you do. Be in our pool of artists. 426-4469. (c)

ALL APARTMENT ADS, even if you rent space in your own home, are business ads and must be paid for at the business rate (see form).

DEAR ADVERTISER
If race is not a crucial issue for you, why put it in your ad? It is not a required formula; GWM GWF are not necessary. GM or GF would do as well.

TO ALL THOSE WHO IN AND OUT OF PRISON FIGHT AGAINST THEIR BONDAGE
(Alexander Berkman, Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist).



I am a 38 yr old Black female, professional cosmetologist and pursuing a BS degree in Computer Science. I enjoy playing tennis, modern dance, reading and writing. I am bi-lingual (Eng and Spanish) and a very positive motivated energetic person. Sandra D. LAURENCE, W-19366, Latham B 319, Frontera CA 91720.

Very admirable Black woman would like to correspond with an individual who has time to really build a solid relationship. I'm young and very sexy. Please respond with SASE and photo if possible. Darlin R. CALDWELL, No.2-L, 220 E. Maryland St., Indpls, IN 46204.



If anyone in prison ever writes and tells you how good and trustworthy their administration has been (for allowing them some privilege even though their gay), tell them the contents of this letter [about his administration's betraying him; will be printed in full soon in GCN] or ask them to write me. I'd really like to have some penpals now that I'm so isolated if you could put an ad in for me. Thanks! A. Brent EARLS, 44604 (A-3), Box 600, Canon City CO 81212.



Prisoners Seeking Friends

JAILHOUSE LAWYERS MANUAL

We've had MANY (!) more requests than we had copies. We're trying to get more but will probably NOT be able to fill all the orders. Be patient and we'll do what we can. Thanks!

BUILDING MORE PRISONS TO CURE "CRIME" IS LIKE BUILDING MORE TOILETS TO CURE DIARRHEA...

I've come to you swollen in loneliness. I cannot describe the compassion I seek. I am not without logic. I have survived deep distress and rejection by enduring the moment. The space I inhabit is a pressured zone of influence. The hours I spend in contemplation have often misled my decisions. I've made progress. Still I'm alone. Please consider writing. Veophilus H. BLACK, 047889, Box 900, Jefferson City MO 65102.

If anyone knows about law or other civil rights and wants to be friends with a gay man, I'm in solitary confinement and can get mail from other prisons and would like to hear from you. Need some friends to stay in the right space of mind. Michael SELLARS, 634034 (3-3-IMU), Box 520, Walla Walla WA 99362.

I'm writing to a nice guy from Dignity in Houston but I feel I need more friends. I still feel alone for some reason. I'm thinking some lonely and awful in a way thoughts (just losing it I guess) Well anyway, I should say something about myself. I like one on one relationships. It seems no one does anymore. I'm just an old fashion gay male I guess, but it's what I'll always be. I also like travel, but don't do much of that anymore (smile), and the beach and backpacking. Dennis JONES, 394877 Eastham, Box 16, Lovelady TX 75851.



I'm more comfortable with flora and fauna than with people; don't drink or smoke, love piano music and making love under the stars more than money. I write bad poetry and have a barely restrainable urge to build something larger than myself. What I am looking for is someone to share my thoughts and dreams with. That's all I can say. David Leon BARTH, 066796 (B-37), Box 500, Olustee FL 32072.



I don't know what to say to tempt someone to want to know me better. How about 'Here I sit in a hole, playing with my pole; drop me a line and make me feel whole' (smile). I'm locked up and don't want my feelings to be hurt because of being behind bars. Hope you like the drawing I'm enclosing for use in the paper. Robert DRISCOLL, Box 900 CP-33, Jefferson City MO 65102.

Looking for a friend and companion, someone to sponsor me for parole. I'm a serious college student, warm and very affectionate. I need some encouragement and support. Send photo and SASE please. Mel "Micky" RHODES, 287630 (B-3-6W), Box 520, Walla Walla WA 99362.



CALENDAR

**May 18
to
June 2**

18 saturday

Boston — Values, ethics and personal spirituality: a presentation to the Greater Boston's Gay Men's Association. St. John the Evangelist, 33 Bowdoin St., Beacon Hill. 8PM. All welcome; bring food or drink; donations to AIDS Food Bank welcome.

Cambridge — Amethyst Women's Dance. First Congregational Church, 11 Garden St., Mason St. entrance. 9PM. \$4, more/less. Drug- & alcohol-free. Childcare available. Wheelchair accessible.

Cambridge — Pasolini's *Teorema*. Modern Times Cafe, 134 Hampshire. 9PM. \$3. Info: 277-4618.

Boston — "Illusions," mime and magic by Jim Vetter. Mirage Studio Theater, Boston Center for the Arts, 551 Tremont St. 8PM. (Also Fridays through 4/25) \$5. Info: 267-4170.

Cambridge — 3 films by independent Black filmmakers. YWCA, 7 Temple St. 7:30PM. \$2.75. Also Sun. Info: Angry Arts, 522-1058.

Cambridge — Acting Out Addictions: a theater workshop for women. Cambridge YWCA, 7 Temple St., Central Sq. 12-5PM. \$15-40. Info: 628-9172.

Boston — Mayfest '85: music, food, fun & games. The Fens. 11AM-4PM. Free. Info: 437-2110 or 437-3153.

Portland, Maine — Kate Clinton, lesbian-feminist humorist. Luther Bonney Auditorium, University of Southern Maine. 8PM. Info: Gay People's Alliance, (207) (207) 780-4085.

19 sunday

Framingham — Fashion Show sponsored by Tri-County Association; Carondelet Hall, The Deaf Community Center, Bethany Road. 7PM. \$6, advance/\$7.50, door (includes dinner & show, BYOB). Info: 376-8145.

Cambridge — New Men's music and poetry. Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave., Harvard Sq. \$5, \$4 in advance. All welcome. Info: 625-4293.

Watertown — GLOW (Gays and Lesbians of Watertown) hike and picnic on the Fellsway and monthly meeting, 7PM, with pizza party. Info: 923-2065 or 926-5371.

Boston — Unitarian Universalist Gays and Lesbians: presentation by David Scondras. Clarke room, Arlington Street Church. 7PM. Info: 262-2068.

Boston — Am Tikva Men's Potluck. Info: 782-8894.

Boston — "Common Threads: Stories and Fibers from many cultures." Children's Museum. All-day celebration. Info: 498-9014.

Ogunquit, Maine — Chiltern Mt. Club annual 70-mile ride from Ogunquit to Crane's Beach. Info: Eugene, 776-2041, (weekends: (207) 646-3534) or Jose, (603) 569-1254.

Boston — Disabled Lesbians Potluck. Call 524-1142 for more information.

Brighton — BBANGL Potluck Dinner for Brookline/Brighton/Allston Gay Men and Lesbians. 6PM. Info: 782-0885.

20 monday

Boston — Abuse in Couples lecture in Women's Health Forum Series. 7PM. Morville House library, 100 Norway St. Wheelchair accessible. Info: 267-7573.



Pier Paolo Pasolini, see May 18

21 tuesday

Boston — Rainbow Coalition Gay & Lesbian Constituency general meeting. 7:30PM. All welcome. U. Mass. downtown. Info: Ellen, 522-2921.

Cambridge — Program for Adult Children of Alcoholics. Touchstone Center for Personal Growth, 678 Mass. Ave., Suite 401. 7:30PM. \$8. Info: 576-2114 or 371-2238.

Boston — Mass. Lesbian & Gay Gay Bar Assoc. first Annual Meeting. Appalachian Mt. Club, 3 Joy St. 5:30PM. Info: 482-6029 or 492-5110.

22 wednesday

Cambridge — Workshop on street theater by Performing Artists for Nuclear Disarmament. Cambridge Food Co-op, 580 Mass. Ave. 6PM. \$2.

Boston — StreetSafe Benefit Dance. Metro, 15 Landsdowne St. \$3. Info: 262-0060.

23 thursday

Boston — Gay Community News always needs help on production night when articles are proofread and pasted up. If you've done proofreading or layout and would like to volunteer, stop by 167 Tremont St. 5th Floor (5-8pm for proofing, 7:30-11pm for layout). Come help out GCN and read tomorrow's news today.

Jamaica Plain — AIDS Forum: presentation, questions & answers; Agassiz School, Child St. 7:30PM. Sponsored by J.P. Lesbian & Gay Neighbors and AIDS Action Committee. Info: 522-6983.

24 friday

Boston — GCN VOLUNTEER NIGHT!!! Come help send out the paper to our subscribers. Refreshments and good times. Come anytime after 6PM to 167 Tremont Street, 5th Floor (near Boylston and Park Street "T" stops). If the door is locked, buzz us on the GCN intercom located outside the front door.

Boston — Northeastern University's 1st Gay & Lesbian Dance; Ell Center ballroom, 360 Huntington Ave. 9PM. \$2. Refreshments available. Info: 437-2738.

Brookline — Films for Cynics: "What Every Boy and Girl Should Know," "Reagan Movie Bloopers" and more. Brookline Arts Center, 86 Monmouth. 8PM. \$3. Also Sat. at Modern Times Cafe, Cambridge. Info: 277-4618.

Boston — Am Tikva Shabbat service & oneg; Hill House, 74 Joy Street, Beacon Hill. Info: 782-8894.

Saco, Maine — Lesbian Camping Weekend. Fri.-Mon. \$25. Info: Dorothy, 576-0925 or Diane, 426-4848.

Portland, Maine — Mrs. James Dean, a new play sponsored by Gay People's Alliance. Univ. of Southern Maine, Luther Bonney Aud. 8PM. Thurs.-Sat. till 6/2. Info: 780-4085.



Kate Clinton, see May 18

25 saturday

Boston — Rebirthing workshop. 10AM-4PM. \$40. Info: Cathy Baker, 282-7227.

Portland, Maine — Womyn's Dance to benefit Take Back the Night. Chemical-free. Friends Meeting House, outer Foreset Ave. 9PM. Info: (207) 774-3613.

Boston — Open women's jam sponsored by Rock Against Sexism. Bring instruments. 3-9PM. 464 Harrison Ave., basement. Info: 723-7339.

26 sunday

Boston — Black and White Men Together Dinner Dance. Music by Soft Brown Sounds, featuring Semenya McCord. \$25. Info: 563-3392.

28 tuesday

Boston — Boston Bisexual Women's Network — topic "Gay Liberation is Our Liberation"; Somewhere Else (upstairs), 295 Franklin St. 7PM. Info: BBWN, P.O. Box 1534, Jamaica Plain 02130.

29 wednesday

Randolph — Film benefit for Lesbian/Gay Pride Committee: *Pink Triangles*, *On Guard*, and *Farewell to Charms*. Randolph Country Club. 7:30PM. \$4. Info: 391-3411.

30 thursday

Boston — Film benefit for Lesbian/Gay Pride Committee: *Pink Triangles*, *On Guard* and *Farewell to Charms*. Mass. College of Art Aud., Huntington Ave. 7:30PM. \$4. Info: 391-3411.

Cambridge — Cathy Winter concert. Passim's, 47 Palmer St. 8:30PM. Info: 492-7679.

31 friday

Cambridge — Film benefit for Gay/Lesbian Pride Committee: *On Guard*, *Farewell to Charms* and *Dykectactics*. For women only. Martin Luther King School, Putnam Ave. 7:30PM. \$4. Info: 391-3411.

june 1 saturday

Salem — Boston Gay Men's Chorus. Old Town Hall. 7PM social hour, 8PM concert. \$7. Reservations: 639-1398.

2 sunday

Cape Cod — Bike Get-together for women. 11AM sharp. Bring lunch. Info: Deb, 398-1557.

Boston — Ongoing women's book discussion group open to new members. 6-8PM. This week: Tillie Olsen's *Tell me a Riddle*. Info: Nancy, 489-3601 or Liz, 666-0350.

Boston — Marathon route by bike with Chiltern Mt. Club. 60 miles (or 40 mile sub-route). Info: Lew, 547-0340.

Notes

my romeo, a contemporary drama by Vincent Sessa. Directed by Daniel Wilson. Presented by Center Theater at the Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, 208 West 13th St., New York City. April 28-30, May 4, 5, 11, 12.

For the first show as theater-in-residence at New York's Lesbian and Gay Community Services Center, Center Theater producers Conn Fleming and Richard Foltz chose a demanding new script and came through honorably; though not without flaws in writing and performance, *My Romeo* was one of the most rewarding evenings of gay theater I've seen in recent months.

Author Vincent Sessa has transposed Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* to contemporary suburbia and made both of the ill-starred lovers men — Rob Hill and James Cliff. Despite a good deal of humor, however, the play isn't a parody or camp version of Shakespeare, but an ambitious attempt to write a modern poetic play using both the framework of the earlier tragedy and the audience's knowledge of a familiar story. In the new setting, plot tensions are neatly heightened not only by the enmity of the lovers' families — here the result of past business dealings — but by the homophobia of the parents. Thus the gradual alienation of the lovers from the rest of society and their ultimate suicides gain an extra level of credibility and meaning.

As a writer, Sessa has a fondness for "heightened" language and poetic expression. When I've seen earlier scripts of his in staged readings, I've sometimes felt that he was using his undeniable verbal gifts to avoid dealing directly with real human issues and conflicts. In *My Romeo*, the wordplay and fancy language generally work well at creating the kind of resonance Sessa is clearly aiming for. There's some particularly strong, poignant writing in the scenes between Rob and James, and the way in which they discover their mutual attraction, gradually overcome their fears, and finally express their love, is the most moving and completely achieved element in the script. Elsewhere, especially in the over-long second act, the play still needs trimming, and Sessa might consider clarifying some ambiguities such as James's "false death" — one of the few places where the transition from Shakespeare hasn't worked out convincingly.

The production benefited greatly from Daniel Wilson's direction, which generally articulated the strengths of the play and minimized its weaknesses. The Elizabethan "frame" — half-timbered set and "period" prologue figures — worked well, and the crucial scenes between Rob and James were staged with particular insight and feeling. All three main players — Stephen Grafenstine (Rob), Scott McKinley (James), and David Edelman (a roller-skating Mercutio) — did excellent work, and while some of the supporting actors were miscast or weak, others — particularly Libby Lyman and Janet Kenney — were strong. Given the severe physical limitations of the performing space, I found the choices made by Wilson and designers Christopher McCollum (set) and Jean Redmann (lights) both shrewd and imaginative.

While parts of *My Romeo* struck me as overwritten or precious, it was encouraging to see a talented writer who chooses to work in something other than a blandly realistic mode. I hope the play will resurface elsewhere. And I hope that Center Theater will continue as it has begun, since on its first outing it has done well by its author, its sponsor (all proceeds went to the Center) and its audience.

— Nicholas Deutsch

Calendar compiled by Miranda Kolbe

GAY COMMUNITY NEWS

Gay Community News is now in its twelfth year of publication. Have you subscribed yet? You save \$21.00 off the newsstand price when you purchase a one-year subscription. (So do it today and don't miss another issue!)

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